

Post Treatment Care for Endodontic Therapy

It is important that you understand what you will feel after treatment and more important to know what you need to do to ensure a successful outcome for your treatment:

Immediately Following Treatment:

- It takes 30-60 minutes for the temporary filling on your tooth to set – while you may consume liquids during this period, please avoid eating any solid foods until 60 minutes have elapsed.
- While you are anaesthetized, “frozen”, and may not have feeling in the area, please avoid eating or drinking anything hot as you may not feel the heat and burn yourself.
- Root canal treatment induces an inflammatory response in the supporting tissues surrounding the treated tooth. As such, your tooth and surrounding gum tissues may be tender or painful for several days. This discomfort is normal and is no cause for alarm. Our experience has shown that if there was pain prior to treatment, there will be a degree of pain that will persist for a few days after the procedure. As well, it is not unusual to feel pain when there was none prior to treatment.
- **Often there is minimal-to-moderate pain for a few days after treatment. A small percentage of patients will experience severe post-operative discomfort. An increase in the intensity of discomfort may also occur 2-to-3 days after your procedure (as the inflammatory response peaks). Discomfort may persist for up to a week’s time or in some cases longer.** As the inflammatory response begins to dissipate, the associated tenderness/pain in the tooth and surrounding tissues will also gradually dissipate.
- Pain control is very important in the post-operative period. It is better to avoid pain rather than to deal with it once it has presented. In some cases, we may recommend that you take pain medications prior to the freezing wearing off. Various medications may be used to control pain. Options for non-prescription pain medications may include:
 - Ibuprofen 600 mg every six hours (three 200 mg Advil or generic equivalent) ○ Acetaminophen 1000 mg every six hours (two 500 mg Tylenol or generic equivalent) ○ Ibuprofen 600 mg and acetaminophen 1000 mg may also be taken in combination every six hours for an enhanced analgesic effect
 - **Should you experience pain that cannot be controlled with the above medications, please contact us. A prescription pain medication may be needed.**
- Minor gum swelling or soreness does not mean infection – it means an increase in blood volume going to the area to assist in the healing process. Nevertheless, post-operative infections (i.e. significant swelling, pus coming from the gums, etc...) do occasionally occur (~ 5% of patients). Many times placing you on an antibiotic for one week will take care of the infection. Occasionally, other follow-up procedures will be needed. **Please contact us if significant swelling is noted or if a post-operative infection is suspected.**

Other Instructions:

- The biting surface of your tooth has been sealed with a temporary filling. This temporary filling is not meant to withstand normal chewing forces – as such, please avoid any hard or sticky foods. Heavy biting forces may lead to fracture and loss of the tooth.
- It is common (and not a problem) for a small portion of your temporary filling to wear away or break off. If the entire filling dislodges, please call our office to set up a time to have it replaced.
- **Once your root canal treatment is complete and once post-operative symptoms have settled, we strongly recommend that you return to your family dentist and have the permanent filling placed within a 3-4 week period.** A crown may be recommended. Please contact your family dentist for an appointment. A complete treatment report will be sent to your family dentist.
- Please note that temporary fillings may deteriorate and leak after 3-4 weeks. Leakage may lead to recontamination of the root canal and subsequent treatment failure. As such, prompt permanent restoration is paramount in achieving an optimal outcome.

Please notify us in the event of any severe pain, significant swelling, or other problems. And, of course, if you ever have any questions or concerns regarding your treatment, please do not hesitate to contact us!

Ralph Dana, DDS, MSc, FRCD(C)

r.dana@alum.utoronto.ca

Dr. Irwin Golosky BSc., DDS, Cert Endo

baybloorendo@rogers.com