

Logan Dental Associates 787-8207
Root Canal Post-Operative Instructions

Thank you for trusting Logan Dental to provide this important service to you. A root canal (*endodontic therapy*) permits a tooth to be saved that would otherwise have to be removed. Bacteria have entered the nerve (pulp) of the tooth through an injury, cavity or previous filling and can move down the blood vessels of the tooth into the surrounding bone to cause an infection (abscess). The only way to keep the tooth is to remove those toxins and bacteria and seal the tooth from further injury by completing the root canal.

Endodontic therapy has an overall success rate of about 80% over your lifetime, meaning that 1 out of 5 will eventually require re-treatment (like a tooth with a filling may eventually need a new filling due to new decay), root end surgery (when a chronic infection has moved outside the tooth into the bone), or extraction (when other options have been exhausted or are not feasible).

Please take the following precautions while the tooth heals:

Pain: Typically, a tooth may be quite sore for a day or two or even up to two weeks if it was initially abscessed. Take up to 800mg of Ibuprofen (advil) every 6 hours to counteract inflammation and help with pain control. If you feel that the pain is greater than is being controlled (cannot sleep at night), please contact our office.

Antibiotics: Antibiotics may be prescribed if you have systemic symptoms (fever, certain swellings, etc.) If an antibiotic is prescribed take it exactly as directed until gone. Do not take less or cut the treatment short as a worse/greater infection may result. If you experience problems with the medication (diarrhea, severe stomach upset, fungal infections), please discontinue the medication and contact us immediately so that an alternative can be prescribed.

Breakage: Endodontically treated teeth are more susceptible to breakage than other teeth because more of the tooth is missing along its entire length. Avoid chewing hard things on the tooth while it remains unprotected. Temporary filling material is soft and wears down but usually seals quite well for a few weeks. A crown is required on root canal treated teeth to protect them from fracture. A tooth that breaks after having a root canal may not be strong enough to be restored later on.

Emergency Flareup: Occasionally ~1%, a tooth being treated by endodontic therapy flares up and experiences intractable pain. These incidents are worrisome and difficult. A tooth which has not been completely sealed may need to have its canals washed again with disinfectant. A completed root canal that flares up usually requires patience and medication. Please contact our office at 787-8207 for instructions.

Most root canals heal beautifully and will provide many years of service. We hope your experience is as pleasant as possible.