

# **The Terrace Dental Centre**

## **Root Treatment Information**

When a tooth is painful it may be because the nerve of the tooth has become infected.

Once the nerve of the tooth becomes infected there are two alternative forms of treatment, extraction or root treatment

Root Canal Treatment (RCT) offers an opportunity for a tooth to be saved rather than extracted. Root Canal Treatment involves the removal of the infected nerve tissue which normally requires more than one visit.

The usual procedures are:

1. The tooth will be made very numb with local anaesthetic before the diseased tissue is removed
2. The tooth may be dressed with a medicated material between visits
3. All the infected tissue is removed mechanically and cleaned out before the tooth is filled with a root filling

Then the way in which the tooth will be restored depends on how much tooth tissue is present and the patient's preference. i.e. silver amalgam filling, tooth coloured filling or crown

We usually recommend a crown is placed for most teeth that have had root canal treatment.

This is because root treated teeth have no blood supply to them and can become more brittle. This is especially true of your back teeth.

There is usually some discomfort after root canal treatment, which may persist for a few days. Pain killers may be taken, but if pain persists, or is very severe, please contact us.

Root Canal Treatment is about 85-95% successful.

Many factors affect the success of treatment: your general health, the condition of the nerve, bone support around the tooth and strength of the tooth itself.

One of the main reasons for failure is because of breakage or fracture. A fractured tooth may require extraction.

One of the best ways to prevent fractures of a root canal tooth is to have a crown put over the tooth to strengthen it.

Other causes of fractures include grinding of teeth, problems with the bite, trauma, etc.

These fractures can occur either before or after the root canal and are often invisible or difficult to detect.

Root canal treatments are sometimes completed in a single appointment or may take several appointments.

If the treatment spans several appointments, you will have a temporary filling placed on the tooth to protect the canal.

If the filling comes out, please call us and have it replaced.

Once the treatment is begun, it is vital the treatment is completed.

Additional treatment may sometimes be required.

Occasionally, root canal treatment alone does not resolve the problem.

The canals of the tooth can be very narrow or curved or calcified. There may be infection around the roots of the tooth. In this case, antibiotics may be required.

In addition, some teeth have unusual internal anatomy (shape) and this may result in failure of the root canal treatment. Markedly curved, oddly shaped or inaccessible root canals in the tooth make it difficult to clean out and fill the nerve chambers completely.

Instruments used to treat the tooth may become separated in the canal.

The tooth may remain or become sensitive.

A surgical procedure or possibly extraction may be necessary.

We appreciate that this information is quite lengthy and in depth, if you have any questions arising, please do not hesitate to ask your dentists for a further explanation.