

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT ROOT CANALS

What is a root canal? The inside of your tooth is soft, like the inside of your finger. If you cut your finger, bacteria can enter and create an infection. Likewise, your tooth may get infected if bacteria enter the soft area from a deep cavity or trauma. Root canal is when we remove the infection with tiny “scrub brushes” and cleansing solutions.

Is it common? It's the most common procedure dentists do after fillings and cleanings. Over 14 million are done in the U.S. each year.

Can I just take antibiotics? An antibiotic may help temporarily, but you have to remove the infection or it will get worse later.

Will it hurt? After Novocain, you should not feel a thing. New techniques make it easier than ever.

How long will it take? Usually one visit of 45 – 90 minutes.

Will it hurt after wards? If your infection has spread into the jawbone, you may remain tender for awhile.

Does it work? It is highly successful (over 90%). We will inform you if a complication or unforeseen problem arises during treatment.

What about driving, working, exercising, or caring for children afterward? Usually similar to a filling.

My tooth doesn't hurt now. Why? Many medical conditions like diabetes, heart disease or cancer may progress for years with no pain or symptoms. Some abscesses produce pain and swelling, others do not, some come and go.

How soon will I need to permanently rebuild my tooth after root canal? Within 2 – 3 weeks. Otherwise bacteria can get back into the tooth and reinfect the root canal.

Will I need a crown? It depends on how damaged and weak the tooth is; and how much biting pressure it takes. Back teeth are most vulnerable. A crown rebuilds a tooth to nearly its original strength and prevents it from breaking; thus eliminating the need for surgery or tooth loss later on.

What will it cost? A molar tooth takes more time and expertise than front teeth. Fees vary accordingly. Most insurance plans claim to cover 80%, but your true coverage generally ends up closer to 65%. Root canal fees include a temporary filling. There will be a separate charge to rebuild your tooth with a permanent filling, buildup or crown.

Tooth # _____ \$ _____ due as follows: