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Home Instructions Following Root Canal Therapy

1. For the first few days after treatment, your tooth may feel sensitive, especially if there was pain or infection before the procedure. This discomfort can be relieved with over-the-counter or prescription medications such as ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol or generic equivalent). Immediately following treatment, we recommend taking a dose before the numbness is gone to help avoid discomfort. **You may take 600-800 mg of ibuprofen (3-4 tablets) every 4-6 hours after the procedure and thereafter as necessary for pain. If you cannot take ibuprofen due an allergy, stomach ulcer, or as per your physician's advice, you may take 1000 mg acetaminophen (two extra strength Tylenols) every 6 hours.** You can also take both Motrin and Tylenol together for extra analgesia.
2. If the opening in your tooth was restored with a temporary filling material, it is not unusual for a thin layer to wear off in-between appointments. However, if you think the entire filling has come out, contact the clinic immediately. Saliva may re-contaminate the root canal requiring further treatment.
3. A proper final restoration of the tooth is extremely important in ensuring long-term success. Contact your dentist within two weeks to arrange your next appointment. **We recommend the temporary filling should be replaced with a permanent restoration, often a gold or porcelain crown, within 6 weeks of the root canal being completed.**
4. Do not chew or bite on the treated tooth until you have had it restored by your dentist. **DO NOT** use the tooth to bite down on anything hard (peanuts, pretzels, ice, etc.) until the permanent filling/crown has been placed on the tooth. The tooth is prone to fracture and if you bite down on anything too hard or crunchy, you may crack the tooth. Chew foods on the opposite side of your mouth.
5. **The tooth and surrounding tissues may remain sore for a few weeks following treatment.** Warm salt rinses may alleviate the discomfort. The three most common reasons for soreness are:
 - a. Sore jaw joint from having your mouth open for a prolonged time.
 - b. Sore muscle from the injection site.
 - c. Sore gum from the rubber dam placement.
6. A follow-up visit may be scheduled 3 to 12 months after your treatment to evaluate the progress of healing. This appointment will require only a few minutes and is included in the cost of your treatment. This visit is not always required.
7. It is uncommon to experience complications after treatment; however, should swelling or severe discomfort occur, please contact the office immediately at (417) 893-3636. If severe pain or swelling, not controlled by medication, occurs after business hours, please contact your Endodontist on his cell phone. Please have your pharmacy phone number available when the doctor returns your call.

Endodontists
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