

POST ROOT CANAL TREATMENT

What you can experience following a Root Canal/Nerve removal:

- You can experience moderate to dull pain for a few days (generally 1 - 3 days) in the treated area. It is advisable to utilise anti-inflammatory pain tablets directly after treatment, so that pain does not set in once the Local Anaesthetic injection wears off.
- If an antibiotic has been prescribed, you should start taking it directly following treatment. The antibiotic takes at least 24Hrs before it starts to have an effect. It is however not always necessary to have an antibiotic following a root canal procedure.
- The pain that can be experienced following the first phase of treatment (treatment is usually completed in 2 appointments) is due to Inflammation in the bone surrounding the tooth, infective bacteria inside and outside the tooth, trauma and irritation caused by the instruments that are used to clean and remove the nerve.
- In most cases where Nerve Treatment is required, it is not possible to remove the Nerve in its entirety as it has already started to break up due to infection. Therefore even though the objective of the First Phase of treatment is to remove the nerve, it is more than often not possible, **thus you can expect your symptoms to take time to subside**, due to the reasons mentioned above.
- **At the second appointment**, usually 7 - 10 days after the initial treatment, the canals are cleaned out further with a disinfecting solution and are then filled with a rubbery material to seal off the roots.
- You can also experience dull to moderate pain for a few days (usually 1 - 3 days) following this second phase of treatment.
- If a crown/cap is needed following completion of the root canal, you will need a further two appointments.

OUTCOMES AND COMPLICATIONS

As much as we would like to say that once root canal treatment has been performed everything regarding that tooth will be fine forever, this is unfortunately not the case. Even though we utilise the latest equipment and techniques, we cannot guarantee success indefinitely. It only makes the likelihood of success greater.

PTO

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POST ROOT CANAL TREATMENT cont

Depending on the extent of the infection, it may not be possible to complete a root canal treatment with long term positive outcomes. In this scenario the tooth may need to be sacrificed with an extraction being the required treatment.

As much as root canal treatments are done routinely, it is unrealistic to expect a routine result for every tooth treated. Not every tooth is the same and some will be more difficult to treat, thus posing a greater risk of problems in the future.

- Not all canals are straight.
- Some are very curved thus making access very difficult.
- Some canals are very thin (0.5 - 1mm) making it difficult to get an instrument all the way to the tip.

Sometimes the instruments we use do fail, resulting in file separation inside the canal which is un-retrievable.

Due to the “Baobab Tree” micro configuration at the end of the root, it is impossible to clean all of these micro branches with the instruments we have at our disposal today. Thus there is a possibility of re-infection of these canals in future years. There comes a point where Clinical Treatment ends, and where your body’s own Immune System has to kick in and remove this latent infection.

Cleaning agents that we use to clean inside the canals can be transported beyond the end of the root and cause dull pain and inflammation. If this happens it usually only lasts for a few days.

In the extreme event where these cleaning agents cause an interaction with the nerves supplying the tooth, the only way to relieve the pressure of the nerve is to have the tooth extracted.

It is not my intention to scare you about the negative outcomes that are possible when having a root canal procedure. Most of the time (in the 95% range) the procedure is completed without incident, with a good long term prognosis.

However, you as the patient need to be aware of what is happening and what can happen when treatment does not go as we have hoped for.

If you have any doubt about your progress, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

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