

Root Canal Therapy

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Root Canal Therapy

You have been given this sheet because you have an irreversible pulp (nerve) inflammation or an established bacterial infection in the tooth that requires a Root Canal Treatment in order to try and save the tooth. The alternative to this would be to extract the tooth.

The information in this sheet will help you to be able to give informed consent to the procedure should you decide to proceed. The information in this sheet is of a general nature and your dentist will discuss any likely variations in your personal situation. It is expected you will ask questions about anything you don't understand.

Treatment involves the mechanical removal of the inflamed or dead tissue from inside the tooth's root canals combined with chemical disinfection of the canal space to try and eliminate the pathogenic bacteria followed by the careful filling and sealing of the canal space to prevent bacterial re-infection .

Although there are several options to replace failed teeth these days it is generally accepted in the scientific literature that the retention of your natural teeth, even if heavily restored with a root canal and a crown, is the preferred option in favourable conditions.

Root canal therapy is a complex and technically demanding procedure but one which, when performed well, has a very high success rate. The scientific literature shows 10 year survival rates around 95% .

StKildadentist has invested heavily in this area and the Practice uses the latest proven technologies such as Nickel-Titanium rotary files, electronic apex locators and a state-of-the-art Zeiss operating microscope which allows for magnification of up to X24 which can be very useful for finding those small canals!

Successful Outcomes

As mentioned StKildadentist uses the very latest in root canal treatment technology to make your treatment as painless, quick, and successful as possible.

However, sometimes Root canal therapy can be complicated. The good news is such complications are rare and StKildadentist is able to complete the vast majority of root canals in-house. Factors that influence treatment success include:

- Undetectable root fractures or lateral canals
- Virulence of the infection
- Immune response of the patient

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Sometimes a Root Canal may be unusually difficult to complete. This can be for a variety of reasons:

- The canals are very fine and narrow and difficult to find or clean
- Access to the tooth is very difficult
- Occasionally instruments may separate in the canals

In all such cases StKildadentist will refer you to a Specialist Endodontist. They specialise in root canal therapy. This is to ensure that the tooth has the best chance of a positive outcome. Unfortunately this means treatment costs may increase significantly.

The Final Restoration

Obviously there is no point going to all the expense and trouble of having a root canal unless you can use the tooth at the end of it.

Molar teeth in particular are subjected to large occlusal forces and generally the very large fillings needed to completely rebuild broken down root-filled molar teeth struggle to survive long-term. The scientific literature shows the survival rates for crowned root-filled molar teeth are dramatically better than for those which are not crowned.

Crowning for pre-molar and anterior teeth is not always necessary and is judged on a case-by-case basis.

It should also be noted that root-filled teeth often discolour over time and this may result in future cosmetic work being needed if it is a visible tooth.

Cost

There are a lot of variables affecting the price of Root Canal Treatment. Your dentist will quote you specifically for your situation.

Other resources for information on root canal include:
www.ada.org/public/topics/root_canal.asp

