

WHY IS ROOT CANAL TREATMENT NEEDED?

Root canal treatment (also called endodontics) is needed when the blood or nerve supply of the tooth becomes inflamed or infected. The most frequent causes of this are:

- A crack in your tooth allowing bacteria to reach the nerve and cause inflammation.
- Decay in your tooth allowing bacteria to reach the nerve.
- A recent repair to a tooth. Treatment that is done to mechanically repair a damaged tooth crowns, fillings etc have the potential to be 'the straw that breaks the camels back' and cause the nerve to die. The more damaged your tooth is before the repair, the greater the chance that its nerve will die.
- A knock to your tooth.



HOW DO I KNOW IF I NEED ROOT CANAL TREATMENT?

When the nerve becomes inflamed your tooth will usually become increasingly sensitive to temperature changes. At first it will be most sensitive to cold. As your nerve becomes more inflamed, this sensitivity to cold usually diminishes and your tooth becomes more sensitive to heat.

Eventually your tooth becomes painful and throbs constantly. In the early stages of inflammation your tooth may recover over time but in the later stages it will start to die and progress to an abscess.

You may not feel any pain in the early stage of an abscess but as pus increasingly collects in the jawbone around the tooth, the pressure there causes intense pain. The pain increases as you move your tooth or press on it.

The long term treatment for all nerve problems is root canal treatment.



WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE THE TREATMENT?

By having root canal treatment you can avoid losing a tooth. Once the nerve is destroyed, it cannot heal and it is not recommended to leave an infected tooth in your mouth.

Although some people would prefer an extraction, it is usually best to keep as many natural teeth as possible. Losing a tooth can cause moving and overloading of your remaining teeth.



DOES IT HURT?

No. A local anaesthetic is used and it should feel no different than having an ordinary filling done.



WHAT WILL MY TOOTH LOOK LIKE AFTER TREATMENT?

In the past a root filled tooth would often darken after treatment. Modern techniques mean that this does not usually happen. If there is any discolouration, there are several treatments available to restore the natural appearance.



WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

The aim of the treatment is to remove all the infection from the root canal. The root is then cleaned and filled to prevent any further infection.

Root canal treatment is a skilled and time-consuming procedure. Most courses of treatment will involve two or more visits.

During the first appointment the infected pulp is removed. Any abscesses, which may be present, can also be drained at this stage. The root canal is then cleaned and shaped ready for the filling. A temporary filling is put in and the tooth is left to settle.

The tooth is checked at a later visit and when all the infection has cleared, the tooth is permanently filled.



WHAT IS THE SUCCESS RATE?

Root canal treatment is about 90% completely successful on back teeth and 95% successful on front teeth. Of the few percent that do not respond correctly, some are merely a little tender occasionally and a few need to be removed or redone in spite of having had root canal treatment.

WILL THE TOOTH BE SAFE AFTER TREATMENT?

Yes, however a dead tooth is more brittle so it may be necessary to restore your tooth with a crown to provide extra support and strength to the tooth.

We sometimes delay crowning your tooth until a few months after your root canal treatment if we need time to make sure that your treatment has been successful.



WHERE CAN THIS TREATMENT BE CARRIED OUT?

Root canal treatment is a routine dental procedure which we are happy to do for you. However if we feel that your case is particularly difficult then we will refer you to an Endodontist who is a specialist in this type of treatment.

WHAT ABOUT AFTER CARE?

Teeth that have had canal root treatment should be treated just the same as any other tooth. Remember to clean your teeth at least twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste. Cut down on sugary snacks and keep them only to meal times if possible. See us for regular check-ups.



Diamond Dental Care & Implant Centre is dedicated to promoting a high standard of quality in both dentistry and customer care. We have created a relaxed and inviting environment for you to visit and a comfortable and enjoyable workplace for us to work in.

Our priority is to achieve and maintain your dental health. We take great care in helping you understand any treatment in terms of benefit to you as well as time and costs involved.

If there is anything that you wish to discuss with us, please call us on (07) 5477 0889 between 8am and 5pm Monday to Friday. Alternatively you can send us a question by email from info@diamdondentalcare.com.au at any time.

We look forward to seeing you!

