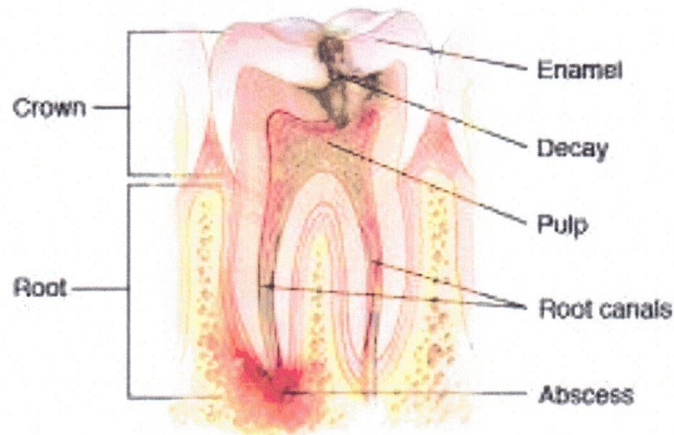


Root Canal Treatment

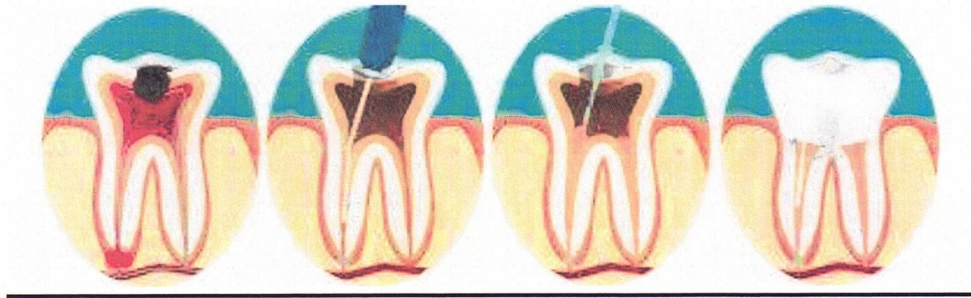


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If your tooth's nerve and blood vessels become infected by decay, root canal treatment is often the only way to save your tooth. Inside your tooth's hard outer shell is pulp tissue consisting of blood vessels, lymph vessels, and nerves. The root canals, which also contain the same types of neurovascular bundles, extend from the pulp through each tooth root into the bone. Deep tooth decay, or an injury, can cause serious damage and infection to the pulp's nerves and vessels. The goal of a root canal (also called nonsurgical endodontic treatment) is to clean out the infected pulp and the root canals and getting rid of the source of the bone infection and abscess.

Symptoms of a tooth that might need root canal treatment is spontaneous pain, throbbing, or pain while chewing. Bad sensitivity to hot and cold foods or drinks can be an indication that a root canal is needed. Other reasons for root canals are

severe decay or an injury that creates an infection or abscess in the bone, bone, gum, or cheek swelling, unexplained “bumps on the gums”.



The Procedure

After the tooth is anesthetized, an opening is made through the top or tongue side of the crown that extends into the pulp chamber. The length of the root canals is determined either by radiography or an instrument called an Apex Locator.

The unhealthy pulp is removed, the canals are cleaned, enlarged, and shaped. The canals are then filled and sealed with a rubber-like material called gutta percha. A metal post may be added for structural support or to retain restorative materials. The tooth is sealed with a filling.

Common Questions

What are my other choices rather than a root canal? It depends on the nature of the problem. Generally speaking, other choices are to do nothing at the present time or extract the tooth. If the tooth is abscessed, then it's unwise not to do

something because of the risk that the infection can spread to surrounding tissues.

Is there always pain with an infected tooth? Not always. If the nerve has died, then the tooth may never hurt or until an abscess forms or the fibers that hold the tooth in the bone become irritated.

How many visits will a root canal take? Most anterior teeth can be completed in one visit, which will take 1 – 2 hours. Treatment of posterior teeth may require 2 or more visits. If more than one visit is needed, then we will place a temporary filling in the tooth.

Will the root canal be painful? We do our best to control the pain. If the tooth is infected, sometimes we'll treat the infection and inflammation with antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medications first, then we will schedule you for the root canal treatment. Reducing the inflammation allows the anesthetic to work better. After the root canal, there will likely be transient discomfort. How long this discomfort lasts depends on many things such as the extent of the original infection, any underlying systemic diseases that delay healing, and the patient's postoperative hygiene and care of the tooth. If there is any swelling before the root canal, it is expected to disappear after the root canal. If the swelling doesn't disappear or if it disappears and comes back, or if there should be any strong pain, call our office at 402-905-2950 or text or leave a voicemail at 402-709-3418.

Will I need to get my tooth filled or crowned after the root canal? Yes. A filling is always needed to prevent saliva and food from entering the tooth. Posterior teeth require a crown to protect the tooth from fracture. Anterior teeth require crowns depending on the extent of damage to the natural crown by fracture or decay.