

### **What should I expect after root canal treatment?**

In general, root canal treatment does not cause significant post-operative discomfort. The amount of discomfort depends on several factors, such as the presence of pain or swelling before treatment. It is not unusual to experience continued mild discomfort to biting and chewing for up to a week after treatment. In most cases, over the counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen (Motrin) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) are more than adequate. Patients that present with significant pain and swelling from an infected tooth or from a previously treated but re-infected tooth may have a longer period of post-treatment discomfort. Each case is different and will be evaluated individually as to the amount of discomfort that can be expected.

### **How should I care for the tooth after treatment?**

Your tooth has a small temporary filling on the biting surface. Avoid chewing on the tooth until the anesthetic has worn off. You may want to continue to avoid chewing on the tooth for a few days if it is tender, but it is unlikely you will have to significantly alter your diet. Remember, you need to return to your dentist as soon as you can for the final restoration, ideally no later than 4 weeks after your root canal has been completed.

### **If endodontic surgery (apicoectomy or root amputation) has been completed**

Sutures have been placed and will be removed the following week. Slight bleeding in the area can be anticipated for the first 24 hours. Avoid vigorous exercise and chewing on that side until the sutures are removed. Brush your teeth in that area but avoid contacting the gum tissue. If a rinse was prescribed, follow the directions on the bottle.

### **How will I know if there is a problem?**

There is very little likelihood that an acute emergency will occur after root canal treatment that will require immediate intervention. Some things to look for would be a *rapidly progressive swelling, difficulty swallowing or breathing, or high fever*. These things rarely occur after treatment. *Pain that is of moderate intensity but manageable with pain relievers, either over-the-counter or prescribed is not unusual and should not be alarming to the patient.*

### **Don't I need antibiotics?**

Usually not. There are few instances where an antibiotic is indicated, and it is seldom indicated after routine root canal treatment. Proper antibiotic usage is important, and they will not be prescribed unless indicated. Antibiotics will only be prescribed when there is a true medical need.

### **Recommended medications**

600 mg of Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, generic are all the same) every 6 hours for 2 days, *unless allergic to ibuprofen or aspirin-containing products*. If allergic to aspirin and aspirin-containing products, you can take 1000 mg of Tylenol (acetaminophen) every 6 hours. In some instances you may have been given a prescription for a pain reliever or steroid. If so, follow those direction exactly as directed.

### **After hours**

All patients that have had treatment are given Dr. McConnell's number in case of a true emergency. Routine questions are best answered during normal business hours.

