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Understanding Your Root Canal

What is a root canal?

A root canal is the removal of an infection and the infected nerve from the inside of your tooth. That space is then sterilized and filled so that no further infection can get in.

Will it hurt?

You may already be experiencing pain, which is most likely due to an infection in your tooth. In some cases the dentist may prescribe antibiotics which, if taken as prescribed, should reduce your pain as the infection is taken away. Though the pain may subside, the cause of the infection is still there which means that you still need the root canal. Your tooth will be numbed while we work on it so you should not feel anything during the procedure. You can expect some discomfort for a day or so after the procedure; remember, your tooth is attached to other nerves. Because of this, we may prescribe very strong pain medication with most root canals. These should be taken only when needed, and can help you sleep. Please don't take it when you need to drive or work, and don't combine medication with alcohol. You may take ibuprofen alone or in combination with Tylenol instead. After a few days, your tooth will begin to feel a lot better.

What happens after the root canal?

After we are sure that all of the infection has been removed, we fill your tooth with a permanent filling. If a large portion of your tooth has broken or has been destroyed by the infection or cavity, we may fit a crown to your tooth to protect it from further damage.

Do root canals always work?

Unfortunately, no. A root canal is a therapy, not a cure. Our office has a very high success rate. In some cases, the infection may not clear up and we may need to send you to a specialist or extract the tooth.

Please don't hesitate to call with questions.

All fees are due in full at the time of service unless other financial arrangements have been made. If you are paying out-of-pocket and need to make payments for larger procedures, the final payment is due at the time the procedure is completed. Please be prepared to pay at least half of your financial responsibility at the first visit, and the remainder upon completion.