

ROOT DRESSING AND ROOT FILLING ADVICE SHEET

A root filling is usually completed in 2 stages: the 1st stage is called a root dressing and the 2nd stage is the root filling. Root fillings of your particular type are successful in approximately 70%,80%,90% of cases. The variation in success is due to complicating factors, such as the presence of abscess/infection, complicated root anatomy or it is a re-root filling.

ROOT DRESSING

- At this appointment the dead/inflamed nerve is removed from the root(s) of the tooth. This is done in order to either cure an abscess, prevent the tooth from developing an abscess or to remove a painful nerve.
- A sterilising paste is usually placed in the tooth to reduce/settle an infection. A temporary filling is then placed in the tooth to seal it up.
- After this appointment you may be aware of an odd taste – this is normal. You may also have a numb lip from the anaesthetic (which usually lasts about 3 hours) and some discomfort from the tooth. The discomfort should disappear with in a couple of days. You should return to have the root filling placed as required.

P.T.O.

ROOT FILLING

- This will usually be a long appointment. The idea of this appointment is to definitively seal the root(s) of the tooth by replacing the removed nerve(s) with a sterile sealer, after thoroughly cleaning the nerve chamber and root canals using small files.
- A routine filling (or other restoration) is then required to restore the surface of the tooth – long term a laboratory made crown/overlay is usually recommended for back teeth.
- An x-ray is usually taken at this appointment to check that the root filling is the correct length.
- After this appointment you may have a numb lip (from the anaesthetic). You may also have some discomfort which should disappear within a few days.
- At these appointments your dentist will often advise the use of rubber dam. This helps to keep the area of the mouth isolated, thus reducing the risk of infection.
- Please note that on rare occasions, the fine, single-use metal files/instruments used to clean out the root nerve canals can fracture. Curved or fine roots, narrow root canals and re-treatment are factors for an increased risk of instrument fracture. If a fracture occurs, more treatment could be needed, or you might be referred to a specialist to remove the fragment. Sometimes your dentist will leave a broken piece of file in place. If this is the case, the tooth will have to be monitored and further treatment remains a possibility, including removing the tooth.

FOLLOWING ROOT TREATMENT

Root treated teeth sometimes look darker than non-root treated teeth. Your dentist can discuss any cosmetic solutions to this problem if necessary. You may also experience some tenderness or soreness in the mouth after root treatment.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT THE PRACTICE IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY PROBLEMS.

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