

## Root Canal Treatment – Post-Op Instructions

### After Anesthesia

- Numbness may last several hours; avoid chewing until it fully wears off.
- Be careful not to bite your cheeks, lips, or tongue.

### Temporary Filling & Crown

- Do **not** poke or feel the tooth with your tongue – this can loosen the temporary filling.
- A **permanent crown must be placed within 1 month** to prevent decay, fracture, or root canal failure.
- Avoid biting anything hard, sticky, chewy, or crunchy until the permanent crown is placed.
- If the temporary filling falls out, call your dentist. If the office is closed, use temporary filling material from a pharmacy until you can be seen.

### Common Sources of Post-Op Pain

1. Sore jaw joint from keeping your mouth open.
  2. Sore muscles from the injection.
  3. Sore gum from rubber dam placement.
- These usually respond well to OTC pain medication.
  - If prescribed medication causes nausea, dizziness, itching, or constipation, stop taking it and switch to OTC options or call your dentist.

### Oral Hygiene

- Brush and floss normally unless your dentist instructs otherwise.
- Sensitivity toothpaste may help if the tooth feels tender.

### Risks Discussed

- If a file breaks in a curved canal or filling material extends beyond the root, it may need to be sealed with a future **apicoectomy**.
- These situations usually cause no harm but may require additional treatment later.

### Flare-Ups (Important)

- About **5%** of root canals can develop a “flare-up.”
- Symptoms may include:
  - Moderate to severe pain
  - Swelling (sometimes large)
  - Throbbing
  - Bruising
  - General discomfort
- Flare-ups usually begin a few hours after treatment and last **2–3 days**.
- They are more common in badly infected or previously treated teeth but can occur randomly.

### General Notes

- Your dentist aims for a smooth recovery; call if you have concerns about pain, swelling, or the temporary filling.
- You are responsible for costs if instructions are not followed.