

Informed Consent

Root Canal Treatment

Inside every tooth there are fine canals known as root canals. These contain the dental pulp, which consists of nerves and blood vessels. If the dental pulp dies or is diseased, people experience toothache or an abscess occurs. Root canal treatment is carried out to save the tooth.

To start the root canal treatment, an access is drilled through the top of the tooth to access the root canals. The infected pulp is then removed and the empty canal is disinfected. The canal is then shaped with fine dental files, washed with a sterilising solution and sealed with a final filling. This treatment can take several visits to complete. If there's an infection present, antibiotics are sometimes prescribed.

The final restoration of the tooth is very important. If the tooth isn't properly restored, bacteria can enter again and cause another infection. Sometimes a crown is recommended to strengthen and seal the tooth properly. A crown is an additional cost.

Possible Complications: (these may increase the cost)

- 1) Instrument breakage <5% can lead to specialist referral, surgery or extraction.
- 2) Canal blockage and/or perforation (sclerosed or missed canals)
- 3) Irrigant extrusion (can lead to pain or swelling) this is temporary. We take utmost care to avoid this complication
- 4) Filling materials extrusion (usually sealer only) this may delay healing
- 5) Acute post-treatment pain (managed by antibiotics, Panadol + Ibuprofen)

Treatment Failure:

- 1) Infection / Long-term pain.
Initial 1-5% at 12-48 months
Long term Re-treatment <10-20%
- 2) Structural
Fractures in root or crown (around 10% within 10 years)

Other Options:

- 1) Specialist referral – Endodontist.
- 2) Surgery – Apicectomy.
- 3) Extraction: leading to-
 - Do nothing – tooth movement & bite problems.
 - Partial denture.
 - Bridge.
 - Implant.

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