

Drs. Bankhead and Groipen
617-364-5500

Instructions after Root Canal

Root canal therapy often takes two or more appointments to complete. A temporary filling or crown is placed to protect the tooth between appointments. After each appointment when anesthetic has been used, your lips, teeth and tongue may be numb for several hours. Avoid any chewing until the numbness has completely worn off.

Between appointments, it's common (and not a problem) for a small portion of your temporary filling to wear away or break off. If the entire filling falls out, or if a temporary crown comes off, call your dentist so it can be replaced. It's normal to experience some discomfort for several days after a root canal appointment, especially when chewing. To control discomfort, take pain medication as recommended. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone.

To further reduce pain and swelling, rinse three times a day with warm salt water; dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water, then rinse, swish, and spit.

To protect the tooth and help keep your temporary in place:

- *Avoid chewing sticky foods (especially gum).
- *Avoid hard foods and hard substances, such as ice, fingernails and pencils.
- *If possible, chew only on the opposite side of your mouth.

It's important to continue to brush and floss normally. Usually, the last step after root canal treatment is the placement of a crown on the tooth. A crown covers and protects the tooth from breaking in the future.

If your bite feels uneven, you have persistent pain, or you have any other questions or concerns, please call our office.