

ARROWHEAD LAKES DENTISTRY

Jeffrey Fellner, DDS
Ronald Shelley, DMD MAGD
20265 North 59th Avenue, Suite B5
Glendale, Arizona 85308
623-362-9616
623-362-2514 (fax)

**THIS INFORMATION IS FOR GENERAL USE ONLY.
YOUR INDIVIDUAL SITUATION MAY VARY.
CONSULT YOUR DENTIST FOR SPECIFIC
RECOMMENDATIONS.**

ROOT CANAL THERAPY

The purpose of root canal therapy or endodontic treatment is to restore the tooth to its proper function. The treatment consists of making an access opening into the pulp or nerve chamber through the top of the tooth. The nerve canal(s) is then cleaned, disinfected, enlarged, and shaped with sequential files. Front teeth can have from one to two canals whereas the molars can have from three to four canals. Then each canal is hermetically sealed. Often the procedure can be finished in one appointment, but multiple appointments may be necessary. With a success rate of 95%, we judge success by resolution of any disease at the tip of the root and the absence of the previous symptoms of discomfort and/or swelling.

Materials that are used in endodontic treatment are designed to be well tolerated by the body. The fact of the matter is, not everyone's body is the same. Some people experience discomfort after root canal treatment. This discomfort can be explained as an inflammatory response to the medications and filling materials. The common manifestations are a mild ache and tenderness to biting. Both of these responses tend to improve with time. Clinically there is nothing that can be done to modify these responses outside of surgery on the tissues at the tip of the root. Since the responses generally improve with time, this treatment usually is not warranted. Teeth that have had root canal treatment are structurally weakened and must be restored with a final restoration that reinforces the tooth such as a crown or an onlay.

The following points are important for you to know:

1. There is a temporary filling in the access opening of the tooth. Avoid chewing on the tooth for the present time.
2. If your root canal therapy is completed, you will now need to make the appropriate appointments for a crown or other final restoration of the tooth. If the root canal therapy is not finished, you will need an appointment to complete the root canal.
3. You could have some discomfort for 24 to 48 hours afterwards. This is not unusual.
4. If you were given a prescription for an antibiotic, you should take all of it.
5. If you were given a prescription for pain medication, have something to eat prior to taking the medication to prevent nausea.
6. Should any swelling occur, please call the office.

If you have any questions concerning your treatment, you are welcome to call our office.