



Root Canal Therapy: Procedure, Myths and Post-Treatment Care

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Description

Root canal therapy, often dubbed as endodontic treatment, is a dental procedure that has gained both notoriety and misunderstanding among many. Despite its reputation, it stands as a crucial tool in modern dentistry, often serving as the last resort to save a tooth from extraction. Understanding the essentials of root canal therapy can dispel myths, alleviate fears, and highlight its importance in maintaining dental health. Root canal therapy becomes necessary when the pulp, the soft tissue inside the tooth containing nerves, blood vessels, and connective tissue, becomes infected or inflamed. This inflammation can occur due to deep decay, repeated dental procedures on the tooth, a crack or chip in the tooth, or trauma. If left untreated, this infection can lead to severe pain, abscess formation, and ultimately, loss of the tooth.

The procedure unveiled

Contrary to popular belief, root canal therapy is not as daunting as it may seem. The procedure typically involves several steps. Your dentist will first examine your tooth and may perform X-rays to assess the extent of the infection and determine if root canal therapy is necessary. To ensure your comfort, local anesthesia is administered to numb the area surrounding the affected tooth. Your dentist will create an opening in the crown of the tooth to access the infected or inflamed pulp. Using specialized instruments, the dentist will carefully remove the infected pulp and shape the root canals to prepare them for filling. Once the canals are cleaned and shaped, they are filled with a

biocompatible material called gutta-percha to seal them and prevent reinfection. After the root canal procedure, the tooth may be restored with a filling or crown to restore its strength and function.

Myths debunked

Root canal therapy often carries misconceptions that lead to unnecessary fear. Let's debunk some common myths:

Myth 1: Root canal therapy is painful. With modern techniques and anesthesia, most patients report little to no pain during the procedure. In fact, root canal therapy is performed to alleviate the pain caused by the infection.

Myth 2: Pulling the tooth is a better option. Saving your natural tooth through root canal therapy is usually preferable to extraction. Keeping your natural tooth helps maintain proper chewing function, prevents neighboring teeth from shifting, and preserves the jawbone structure.

Myth 3: Root canal-treated teeth are prone to breaking. While it's true that a tooth may become more brittle after a root canal, restoring it with a crown can significantly strengthen and protect it from fracture.

Post-treatment care

After undergoing root canal therapy, it's essential to follow your dentist's instructions for proper care. Brushing twice a day, flossing daily, and using an antiseptic mouthwash can help prevent further decay and infection. To prevent damage to the restored tooth, avoid chewing on hard foods or objects. Regular check-ups with your dentist are crucial to ensure the success of the root canal treatment and monitor the health of the restored tooth.

Conclusion

Root canal therapy, while often feared, is a highly effective procedure for saving infected or damaged teeth. By understanding the essentials of root canal therapy, dispelling myths, and embracing its importance in maintaining dental health, patients can approach the procedure with confidence, knowing that it offers a path to preserving their natural smile and oral well-being. If you suspect you may need root canal therapy, don't hesitate to consult with your dentist to explore your treatment options and ensure the health and longevity of your smile.

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