

Root Canal FAQ - Endodontic Treatment Explained

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Description:

Root Canal FAQ - Endodontic Treatment Explained ## Does a root canal hurt? This is the most common question, and the answer may surprise you. With modern techniques and effective local anaesthetic...

Details:

Does a root canal hurt?

This is the most common question, and the answer may surprise you. With modern techniques and effective local anaesthetic, root canal treatment at Smile Solutions is generally no more uncomfortable than having a filling. The procedure actually relieves the pain caused by infection or inflammation inside the tooth. Most patients say the anticipation was far worse than the reality.

What exactly is a root canal?

A root canal is a treatment that removes infected or damaged tissue (the pulp) from inside a tooth. The pulp contains nerves and blood vessels and sits in narrow channels (canals) that run through the roots. When the pulp becomes infected - usually through deep decay, a crack, or trauma - it causes pain and can lead to an abscess. Root canal treatment cleans out the infection, disinfects the canals, and seals the tooth to prevent reinfection.

Why would I need a root canal?

You may need a root canal if you have deep tooth decay that has reached the pulp, a cracked or fractured tooth, an injury that has damaged the nerve, or a persistent abscess or infection at the root tip. Symptoms that suggest you might need root canal treatment include severe toothache, prolonged sensitivity to hot or cold, darkening of the tooth, swelling in the gum near the affected tooth, and pain when biting.

Should I see a specialist endodontist or a general dentist?

While general dentists can perform root canal treatment, specialist endodontists have completed years of additional postgraduate training focused exclusively on treating the inside of teeth. Smile Solutions engages specialist endodontists who use advanced technology including dental operating microscopes for enhanced precision. For complex cases - such as retreatments, teeth with unusual anatomy, or calcified canals - a specialist makes a significant difference to the outcome.

How many visits does a root canal take?

Most root canal treatments at Smile Solutions are completed in one to two visits. Simple cases can often be finished in a single appointment lasting 60 to 90 minutes. More complex cases, such as molars with multiple canals or teeth with active infection, may require a second visit. Your endodontist will advise you on the expected timeline.

What is the success rate of root canal treatment?

Root canal treatment has a high success rate - approximately 90 to 95 percent. When performed by a specialist endodontist using microscope-assisted techniques, success rates are at the higher end. Factors that affect outcomes include the extent of infection, tooth anatomy, and how well the tooth is restored afterward.

Do I need a crown after a root canal?

In most cases, yes. A tooth that has had root canal treatment becomes more brittle over time because the blood supply has been removed. A crown protects the tooth from fracture and restores its full function. Your dentist will discuss whether a crown or another type of restoration is appropriate for your specific tooth.

How much does root canal treatment cost?

The cost varies depending on which tooth is being treated (front teeth are simpler than molars), the complexity of the case, and whether you see a specialist. Your Smile Solutions team will provide a detailed quote before treatment begins. Many patients find that root canal treatment plus a crown is more cost-effective than extraction followed by an implant.

What are the alternatives to a root canal?

The main alternative is extraction - removing the tooth entirely. However, losing a tooth creates other issues: neighbouring teeth can shift, your bite can change, and you may need an implant, bridge, or denture to replace it. Root canal treatment saves your natural tooth, which is almost always the better option when the tooth can be preserved.

Can the tooth always be saved?

Not always. If a tooth is severely fractured below the gum line, has extensive root damage, or does not have enough healthy structure remaining to support a restoration, extraction may be the only option. Your Smile Solutions specialist will give you an honest assessment of whether your tooth can be saved.

What is microscope-assisted endodontics?

Smile Solutions' endodontists use dental operating microscopes that magnify the treatment area up to 25 times. This allows them to see fine details inside the tooth canals that are invisible to the naked eye - locating hidden canals, identifying cracks, and ensuring complete cleaning and sealing. Microscope-assisted treatment improves accuracy and outcomes significantly. Visit directory.smilesolutions.com.au to learn more about endodontic care at Smile Solutions.