



## POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### **What should I expect after my root canal?**

Your tooth and its surrounding gum tissues may be somewhat tender for several days. This is a result of the infection that brought you into our office as well as the endodontic manipulation during treatment. This is absolutely normal and is part of the normal healing process. Please expect your tooth to be sore for about 3-5 days. When you touch it, brush it, chew with it, it will and should be tender. Every patient is different and there are varying levels of discomfort. Some patients may even have discomfort for longer (i.e. two weeks). As long as it lessens every day, then you are headed in the right direction. Please make sure you continue to brush and floss the area normally.

### **How should I manage my discomfort?**

To minimize your discomfort you were given 600mg Ibuprofen before you left our office. We gave this to you while you were still numb in order to stay ahead of any discomfort. It is recommended that you continue to take 600mg (that is 3 over-the-counter tablets) every 6 hours. A good way to remember this is to take a dose at: Morning, Noon, Supper and Bedtime. In taking your postoperative medications in this manner, you will keep your discomfort to a minimum. If you allow the pain to return because you skipped a dose, it will be harder to get rid of the discomfort. So please, take the Advil or Ibuprofen, if you have PAIN or NO PAIN, around the clock every 6 hours for the next 3 days. It is best to take your Ibuprofen with food when possible. Please keep your pain medication on your nightstand so that you can take a dose at night. If you sleep longer than 6 hours or skip a dose, please be aware that your tooth will be more tender in the morning.

If you were given a prescription pain medication like Hydrocodone, the best way to take this is in conjunction with 600mg Ibuprofen, do not stop the Ibuprofen. For the most effective pain management, take 600mg Ibuprofen, then 3 hours later take a Hydrocodone tablet, then 3 hours later take another 600mg Ibuprofen, and so on. This way you can take something every 3 hours safely. If additional analgesia is needed, an additional Tylenol may be taken at the same time as the Hydrocodone for added effectiveness. Please make sure not to exceed 3000mg of Tylenol/Acetaminophen in a day and be aware that the Hydrocodone already has 325mg of Tylenol/Acetaminophen in it.

For patients who do not tolerate narcotics (i.e. nausea/vomiting) and need maximum pain management, alternate 600mg Ibuprofen with 500mg Tylenol every 3 hours. Please do not exceed 2400mg Ibuprofen or 3000mg Tylenol in a day.

If your pain is still too severe and you are taking both 600mg Ibuprofen and Hydrocodone or Tylenol, please call the office for additional information and possibly a different prescription. At this time, we may prescribe you a steroid. Please be aware that lower teeth that need a retreatment root canal tend to be more uncomfortable after treatment.

**Your medication times:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow-up:** \_\_\_\_\_



### **What if I have swelling after treatment?**

If you experience any swelling after treatment, (for example, your face looks asymmetrical when you look in the mirror), please call the office and we will prescribe you an antibiotic. Please do not panic if this happens as it sometimes can occur after treatment. This is most common in patients who have a "black spot" in the x-ray associated with their tooth. If you have been given an antibiotic, please complete every pill in your bottle. If swelling occurs while on an antibiotic, we may have to switch your antibiotic. If you have been prescribed an antibiotic and are experiencing significant diarrhea, please discontinue the antibiotic immediately and call our office. This side effect can happen with any antibiotic, but is more common with Clindamycin. We also suggest taking a probiotic or yogurt when taking any antibiotic.

### **What if my temporary filling falls out?**

Your tooth has been restored with a temporary filling. It is a soft filling and needs 1/2 hour to harden. It is important that your tooth remain sealed between appointments. It is possible for the filling to ditch down a little as you chew with it. This is ok, but if you feel that you have lost a significant amount of temporary, please call our office during normal business hours (Monday-Friday 8am-5pm) and we will schedule a convenient time for you to come in to replenish your temporary filling. If this should occur over the weekend, this does not constitute an emergency, please call our office first thing Monday morning and we will see you immediately.

### **What do I after my root canal is completed?**

If endodontic therapy has been initiated on your tooth, it is essential that treatment be completed. If it is not, the tooth will become uncomfortable and may be eventually lost. It is possible that your root canal may take more than one visit if it was too infected or difficult. Once the root canal is done, you may be referred back to your general dentist for a final restoration so that the tooth is properly sealed.

At the completion of your root canal, your regular dentist will be sent a full report with your radiographs so he/she knows your treatment with our office is completed. Please make an appointment with your general dentist within 2 weeks for a final restoration on the treated tooth. If your dentist is booked out longer than two weeks, please do not panic, but take their first available appointment.

We would like to see you for a follow-up appointment in either 6 months or a year. This is to evaluate the bone supporting the tooth to assure proper healing. There is no fee for this visit and the appointment is typically only 10-15 minutes long.

### **What if I need to speak to someone after hours?**

If you should need to speak to someone after hours, please call the office at 704-541-7017 and leave a message in the appropriate doctor's emergency mailbox and Dr. Chopra or Dr. Tadrissi will call you back personally. Please remember for the timeliest response, call our office during normal business hours when possible. Be aware that the after-hours service is available for patients of record only. Also, if you feel like a prescription is necessary, we do ask that you try to call before 10pm and after 8am as these are the hours that the pharmacy is open. Please have your pharmacy phone number ready and make sure to spell your name, leave your date of birth, and leave a phone number when using the answering service.