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Root Canal Therapy Post-Operative Instructions

Please keep in mind that you have just had a very invasive procedure! Be kind to yourself! Following these simple instructions will normally be all that is needed.

1. **Time to Heal:** After root canal therapy the tooth can be quite sensitive for a few days, sometimes even weeks. Complete healing of the inflammation within the bone can take about 6-8 months. Some discomfort, should be expected in the next 24 hours as your tooth responds and heals from the root canal therapy. It is imperative to be patient while the inflammation that is in the surrounding tissues and bone slowly resolves.
2. **Medications:** Prescription medications may be indicated after root canal therapy. If you are given a prescription medication, directions for this medication will have been given to you after your appointment. Most of the time antibiotics are not indicated after root canal therapy.
3. **Sore Jaw Joint:** Your jaw may be sore from holding your mouth open during the procedure. This may last 4-5 days. Massage the jaw muscles gently and apply moist heat for 10 minutes on and then 10 minutes off. Eat soft foods. Do not over extend the opening of your mouth it can further aggravate this area.

4. **Numbness:** When a local anesthetic is used your lip, tongue and cheek will be numb for 4-12 hours after the procedure. During this period you must be very careful not to bite, chew, scratch or pinch this area which can lead to serious soft tissue trauma. There may be some semi-permanent numbing in the area of the procedure. It will decrease in size within the first 6-8 weeks and may even take as long as 6 months to completely return to normal.
5. **Diet:** After your numbness is gone, you are free to eat normally.
6. **Pain:** Pain that seems persistent, but is gradually improving should be considered typical. Pain that seems to be getting worse after two days should be considered abnormal and will require a follow-up visit.
7. **Long Term Considerations:** Root canals that are done on back teeth will need a crown placed on the tooth to ensure its strength. Please do not consider a root canal on a back tooth complete until the crown is finished. On front teeth sometimes we can get by with just doing a filling, depending on the remaining tooth structure and your bite.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these instructions, your procedure, or your healing process DO NOT hesitate to call our office! Drs. Klein and Klein's cell phone number is always on the recording if it is after hours.

Take Care of Yourself!

Drs. Aric and Amy Klein