

ENDODONTIC CONSENT & INFORMATION

WHY AM I HERE? Your general dentist believes that you may need root canal therapy and has referred you to an Endodontist, a root canal specialist. Dr. Simpson is an Endodontist with several additional years of education and training in root canal therapy and local anesthesia. **WHY WOULD I NEED A ROOT CANAL?** There is an extensive list of reasons a tooth may need a root canal, but the number one reason is bacteria getting inside the root canals. Bacteria can get inside the root canals of your teeth through chips, cracks, leaking fillings or crowns, decay, trauma, and replacing fillings or crowns and re-cementing of crowns. In order to attempt to resolve the issue, the tooth will need a root canal to eliminate the bacteria within the tooth which will then allow the tooth to heal.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING ROOT CANAL THERAPY? After you are given local anesthetic (like during a filling), Dr. Simpson will place a bite block to help keep your jaw relaxed and eliminate lockjaw. Lockjaw and TMJ issues can still occur. Dr. Simpson will then place a rubber dam (sterilization drape) around the tooth or crown. He will remove the infected & inflamed nerve tissue and then sterilize and shape the inside of the canals. The outside of the tooth where you chew will have a **temporary** filling placed after treatment. During a retreatment, (re-doing a root canal) Dr. Simpson will attempt to improve on the previous root canal. Re-infection can be caused by leaking fillings, bridges, crowns, cracks, trauma, new cavities, or the body's inability to heal itself. Re-infection can happen if there are lateral canals or calcified canals that were not reached or seen during initial treatment. Damage to fillings, crowns, or porcelain veneers can occur during treatment; keep in mind a microscope and loupes will be used to keep the access hole small, and special burs are used to help eliminate breakage of the porcelain.

CAN THERE BE COMPLICATIONS? Root canal complications lessen when treatment is done by an Endodontist. There may still be circumstances when the treatment cannot be completed on the same day. Some situations may be discovered after gaining access to the inside of the tooth, making root canal therapy difficult or impossible. Many factors can influence success: blocked or calcified canals, resorption, curved roots, cracks, gum tissue attachment and bone support, your own health, your oral hygiene, previous and present general dentist care, undetected root fracture, and accessory or lateral canals. There is always a possibility of separation of the small files used to clean the tissue inside the tooth. A root canal is an attempt to save a tooth, and although the success rate is high with proper restoration, there are no guarantees.