

Root Canal Informed Consent

As explained to me by my dentist and the staff, I have chosen a Root Canal Treatment (abbreviated as "RCT") over other options. As an alternative to a RCT, I could have:

- an extraction (removal of the tooth)
- no treatment

PURPOSE

The purpose of a RCT is to retain a tooth that otherwise might need to be extracted or correct other problems.

SUCCESS RATE

A successful RCT (a) eliminates your pain and (b) allows you to keep the tooth for an additional period of years.

According to some dental studies, a RCT is successful 90% of the time. However, wide differences occur among people and dental conditions. Like all medical and dental surgeries, a successful outcome cannot be guaranteed. Ten percent (10%) of RCTs fail for no known reason.

POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Sometimes unexpected results occur. Here are some of the more common (but not all) RCT complications and risks. You should be aware of these possibilities before agreeing to a RCT:

- Fracture of an existing crown while performing the RCT (replacement may be necessary)
- Failure leading to possible retreatment, surgery (apicoectomy) and/or extraction
- Pain, discomfort, swelling, bruising, infection and/or prolonged bleeding
- Small instruments breaking in the canals of the tooth
- Inability to finish the RCT due to curved roots, calcified canals or other anatomical issues
- Perforation of the tooth by the instruments used during the RCT
- Overfilling or underfilling the canals with filling material
- TMJ (jaw joints in front of your ears) problems
- Fracture of or breaking the RCT-treated tooth or others in the mouth
- Restricted jaw opening due to infection or holding the mouth open for a long period of time
- Inability to locate all canals in the tooth
- Sinus tract communication (an opening into the gum tissue with drainage)
- Accidentally injecting sodium hypochlorite into adjacent tissues causing intense pain/damage
- Permanent or temporary numbness to the cheeks, lips, tongue, teeth and/or gums
 - can be related to the RCT or local anesthetic injection

Should any of these symptoms occur, call the office immediately. Do not wait until the next scheduled appointment.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A RCT

A RCT occurs in an already weakened tooth, so fracture is a greater possibility. After a RCT, the tooth needs some combination of a build-up, post and/or new crown. Do not wait to begin these procedures. Waiting to do a crown after a RCT can cause high risk of breakage of the tooth which can lead to tooth loss.

APPROVAL

I authorize my dentist to perform a RCT on the following tooth/teeth: _____

I understand that an endodontist (root canal specialist) can perform this procedure, and my dentist is a general dentist.

Patient Signature

Patient Name

Doctor Signature

Today's Date