

# Your Guide to a Smooth Recovery After Root Canal Treatment

Congratulations on taking a big step to save your tooth! Root canal treatment (RCT) is highly successful, and following these simple instructions will help ensure your comfort and the longevity of your tooth.

## Immediate Care (First few hours):

**Wait for the numbness to wear off completely** before eating or chewing. Your lip, tongue, and cheek will be numb from the anesthesia. Eating while numb can cause you to accidentally bite and injure the soft tissues, leading to painful sores.

**Gently brush and floss** the rest of your mouth, but be extra gentle around the treated tooth. Good oral hygiene prevents bacterial buildup, but vigorous brushing near the treated tooth could dislodge the temporary filling or irritate the healing gum tissue.

## DOs: For a Quick & Easy Recovery

**Take prescribed medication** as directed *before* the anesthesia wears off. This helps manage post-operative swelling and discomfort by tackling it before the pain peaks.

**Eat soft, nutritious foods** for the next 24-48 hours. Examples: dal rice, curd rice, porridge, Soup, yogurt, juices, smoothies. Soft foods require less chewing force, protecting the temporary filling and the tooth structure from excessive pressure while it heals.

**Keep your follow-up appointment** for the permanent crown or filling. The temporary filling is not strong enough for long-term use.

**Call US** if you experience severe pain, excessive swelling, or an allergic reaction to medication. While minor discomfort is normal, severe symptoms need professional attention right away.

## ✗ DON'Ts: To Prevent Complications

**DO NOT chew or bite directly** on the treated tooth until it receives its permanent restoration (filling or crown). A tooth after a root canal is temporarily more fragile. Chewing hard or sticky foods (like nuts, hard candies, or gum) pulls out temporary filling and reinfects the root canals, puts it at high risk of **fracturing** which might lead to tooth loss.

**DO NOT skip the antibiotic course** if prescribed, as they clear up the remaining infection. Stopping them early can allow the infection to return and become harder to treat.

**DO NOT drink alcohol or smoke** for at least the first 24-48 hours. Alcohol can interfere with pain medication, and both alcohol and smoking can delay the natural healing process and increase the risk of complications.

## What to Expect

- **Minor Discomfort/Soreness:** It is normal for the tooth and surrounding gum tissue to be slightly sensitive or sore for a few days. This usually means your body is healing and resolving the infection.
- **A Different Feeling:** The temporary filling may feel slightly high or rough. If it feels severely uneven and affects your bite, call your dental office.
- **Feeling Great!** Once the initial soreness subsides, you should no longer feel the pain or throbbing from the infection you had before the root canal.

**Remember:** Your root canal is only complete when the permanent crown or filling is placed which **is essential** to seal the tooth, prevent re-infection, and protect it from fracture. *This is the most critical step.*

Treat your tooth with care until that final step is done!