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## ROOT CANAL TREATMENT

### About the proposed treatment

Root canal treatment, also called *endodontic* treatment, involves relieving pain and discomfort by removing the nerve tissue (called *pulp*) located in the center of the tooth and its root or roots (called the *root canal*). Treatment involves drilling through the biting surface of the tooth to expose the pulp, which is removed with very fine metal files. Medications may be used to sterilize the interior of the tooth to prevent further infection.

Each empty root canal is filled with a rubber-like material and medicated cement. Occasionally a metal pin (called a *post*) is also inserted into the canal to help restore the tooth. The opening in the tooth is closed with a temporary filling. At a later appointment, a cap (also called a *crown*) may be placed.

Twisted, curved or blocked root canals may prevent removal of all inflamed or infected pulp. Since leaving any pulp in the root canal may cause your symptoms to continue or worsen. This might require an additional procedure called an *apicoectomy*. Through a small opening cut in the gums and surrounding bone, any remaining pulp is removed and the root canal is sealed. A *apicoectomy* may also be required if your symptoms continue and your tooth does not heal.

Once the root canal treatment is completed, it is essential to return promptly to have treatment completed. Because a temporary seal is designed to last only a short time, failing to return as directed to have the tooth sealed permanently with a crown could lead to the deterioration of the seal, resulting in decay, infection, gum disease and the possible premature loss of the tooth.

### Benefits and alternatives

Root canal treatment is intended to allow you to keep your tooth for longer period. Which will help to maintain your natural bite and the healthy functioning of your jaws. Extracting your tooth is the most common alternative to root canal treatment. This alternative may require replacing the extracted tooth with removable or fixed bridge or an artificial tooth called an *implant*.