

POST-CARE INSTRUCTIONS

For all procedures below, if you have received local anesthesia, avoid eating or chewing until the numbness subsides. In addition, be careful not to bite your tongue or the inside of your cheeks.

Patient Home Care Following Crown or Bridge Appointment

It is important that the temporary crown (or bridge) stay in place until the permanent crown is placed. If the temporary crown becomes dislodged or feels uncomfortable, please call us so that we may see you as soon as possible. Do not attempt to “glue” the temporary crown back in yourself or “go without it” as the teeth may become sensitive or shift slightly, preventing placement of the permanent crown. Some cold sensitivity and tenderness around the gum is normal for the first few days.

If you are experiencing mild pain, ibuprofen (Advil) or naproxen (Aleve) are the drugs of choice. (You can take as much as 600mg ibuprofen every 4-6 hours or 500mg naproxen every 8-10 hours). If you continue to have problems, please call.

Avoid: Avoid chewing anything very hard or sticky on the temporary crown. Examples to avoid: gum, hard crusty bread, taffy, ice or hard candy.

Brush as usual, but floss with care. When flossing, remove floss from the side of the tooth. It is important to brush and keep gum tissue as clean as possible.

Long Term Care of Your New Crown or Bridge:

Now that your crown or bridge has been cemented there are a few things to expect and to care for. Initially, you may experience some sensitivity to cold as the tooth may be slightly irritated by the cement. Sensitivity toothpaste generally helps (ie. Pronamel by Sensodyne). Also, if after a couple of days your bite seems off or it just doesn't feel normal, please call our office for a slight adjustment.

It is extremely important to maintain excellent oral hygiene with your new crown or bridge. Some people have the misconception that a crowned tooth no longer needs to be maintained. Crowns and bridges are still susceptible to decay near the gumline, the same as a natural tooth. The crown strengthens the portion of the tooth above the gumline but this margin area requires special care. Normal brushing and flossing is a must! Additional use of a fluoride rinse (ie. Act or Flurogard), and a high fluoride content toothpaste or gel (ie. Prevident 5000 or Gel Kam) are excellent for preventing additional decay.

Most crowns and bridges have a ceramic outer layer or are all ceramic. These materials are very strong and color stable but they still have potential to fracture like a natural tooth. **DO NOT CHEW ICE!** The extreme temperature change greatly increases the fracture of porcelain and natural teeth.

Care Instructions for Scaling and Root Planning

Wait two hours after your procedure before eating, and eat only soft food for the first 48 hours (ideally, for 72 hours).

- Until healing has occurred, avoid hot, spicy foods and alcohol.
- Avoid tobacco products for at least 72 hours.
- On the first night, brush the area lightly with a soft brush.
- Use a mouth rinse after 48 hours.

- Continue with all antibiotics for the full course even if symptoms have subsided.

If you have any discomfort:

- Take a pain reliever before the anesthetic has worn off or as recommended.
- Rinse mouth with warm salt water.
- Contact our office if you experience bleeding that continues for more than three days or if you have any other concerns.

Arestin Periodontal Treatment

Arestin is a locally administered antibiotic used for treatment of gum disease after a scaling and root planning or periodontal disease maintenance appointment. Arestin helps to reduce pocket depth in patients with periodontitis (gingivitis) and helps to improve gum health.

How does Arestin work on gum disease? Periodontal Disease is a chronic bacterial infection beneath the gum line. This infection breaks down the gingival tissue and bone supporting the teeth. If left untreated, it can lead to tooth loss. Arestin fights this bacterial infection. When placed in a periodontal pocket, Arestin maintains a high-level of antibiotic right at the gum disease site without exposing the rest of the body to antibiotics. This allows treatment using one-hundredth the usual pill-form dose. It directly fights the gum disease infection for 14 days.

Once you leave the office, Arestin continues to fight infection in the treated areas. To promote efficacy, please adhere to the following maintenance schedule:

For 30 minutes after treatment:

No eating or drinking.

For 12 hours after treatment:

Do not brush your teeth.

For 1 week after treatment:

Do not touch the sites treated with Arestin

Do not chew hard, crunchy, or sticky foods (such as carrots, taffy, or gum)

For 10 days after treatment:

Do not floss or use other tools to clean between the treated teeth

Mild-to-moderate sensitivity is normal. Contact us if you have severe pain or signs of an allergic reaction (such as itching or swelling)

After 10 days, resume cleaning between the treated teeth on a daily basis.

Keep up with treatment: Schedule and keep all follow up appointments to help maintain control of periodontal disease.

POST-OP CARE: EXTRACTION

1. **PAIN** – You will likely experience a certain amount of discomfort following the procedure. The doctor may prescribe pain medication for more severe pain. These medications can make you tired/sleepy so you should take precautions while taking them. For less severe pain or mild discomfort, an over-the-counter analgesic such as Advil or Tylenol should be adequate. We recommend 3 Advil (600 mg total) with 1-Extra-Strength Tylenol (500mg) every 6-8 hours.
2. **BLEEDING** – You may have some bleeding following the procedure. Your saliva may be blood-tinged for up to 48 hours. Apply pressure with a piece of gauze directly over the operative site. Change the gauze regularly until the bleeding subsides. Keep your head up and rest. If necessary, you can try wrapping a moist tea bag in gauze and bite down on it. Do this for several minutes.
3. **SWELLING** – To reduce ordinary immediate post-operative swelling, apply an ice pack to the outside of the face for the first 24 hours at intermittent/regular intervals. Prop your head on 1 or 2 pillows when resting. For some procedures, the outside of the face at the operative site may bruise as well.
4. **RINSING** – DO NOT rinse your mouth for at least 24 hours as this may stimulate bleeding. After a 24-hour period, you are encouraged to rinse gently 4-5 times a day with warm salt-water solution (1/2 teaspoon to glass of warm water).
5. **DIET** – For the first 24 hours, cool soft foods are encouraged. For the following week, avoid crunchy, chewy foods such as chips, popcorn, nuts, raw vegetables and apples, as well as spicy or acidic foods. Avoid using straws to drink beverages.
6. **ACTIVITY** – Avoid smoking for at least 5 days. Do not engage in activities that increase your blood pressure (hence promoting bleeding) for at least 72 hours.

New Filling – What to Expect!

Now that your new filling or fillings have been placed there are a few directions you need to follow.

First, be sure that the local anesthetic has completely worn off before chewing. This is to prevent you from biting or injuring your lip, cheeks or tongue. Also, *refrain from drinking anything hot* in temperature or *smoking*. Sometimes patients also find it difficult to swallow while they are still numb, so please be careful.

Our office only places tooth colored resin type fillings. These fillings are completely hardened when you leave the office. You can eat on them as soon as the numbness wears off. Although the fillings are polished before you leave, they may feel slightly gritty at first. This should go away after a couple of days. If not please call.

Immediate post visit cold sensitivity is also possible

This is usually from a normal reaction of the nerve following the procedure. Give it a couple of days and try a sensitivity protection toothpaste (i.e. Sensodyne) until it subsides.

Finally, if your bite seems off or if you cannot bite normally, please call the office to have your filling adjusted. Do not wait for it to wear down on its own as the tooth may become tender.

Periodontal Maintenance

It has been a pleasure working with you and providing the active phase of your non-surgical periodontal treatment. We are proud of what we have accomplished together to manage this non-curable disease. You are now ready to begin the vitally important maintenance phase which will monitor, stabilize and control your periodontal disease.

According to the American Academy of Periodontology, "following a course of active periodontal treatment and periodic ongoing care at regularly prescribed intervals is essential. The majority of clinical studies have shown that 3 months is the most effective in controlling disease."

Periodontal disease or infection can recur. Continuous maintenance is absolutely necessary to prevent this periodontal infection from becoming active once again and destroying any healing that has occurred. When periodontal disease recurs following treatment, it may do so without signs or symptoms to the patient. This is why regular, frequent periodontal maintenance visits are so very important. The following treatment is included in a periodontal maintenance appointment.

- Evaluation of oral health to detect subtle signs of disease recurrence
- Appropriate debridement of teeth and gums
- Antimicrobial therapy to destroy difficult to reach bacteria
- Evaluation of homecare regimes and aids
- Oral health evaluation including oral cancer screening

Root Canal Therapy

Root canal therapy can take 1-2 appointments to complete. After each appointment when anesthetic has been used, your lips, teeth and tongue may be numb for several hours. Avoid any chewing on the side of the treated tooth until the numbness has completely worn off.

A temporary filling or crown is placed by your dentist to protect the tooth between appointments. Between appointments, it's common (and not a problem) for a small portion of your temporary filling or crown to wear away or break off. If the entire filling falls out, or if a temporary crown comes off, please call our office so it can be replaced.

To protect the tooth and help keep your temporary in place:

- Avoid chewing sticky foods (especially gum).
- Avoid biting hard foods and hard substances, such as ice, fingernails and pencils.
- If possible, chew only on the opposite side of your mouth.

It's normal to experience some discomfort for several days after a root canal therapy appointment, especially when chewing. It is not uncommon for a tooth to be uncomfortable or even exhibit a dull ache immediately after receiving root canal therapy. This should subside within a few days (or even weeks). Even if you were not experiencing any discomfort prior to treatment, it is normal for you to

experience some degree of discomfort for a few days after. The tenderness is normal and is no cause for alarm.

To control discomfort, take pain medication as recommended by your dentist. If antibiotics are prescribed, continue to take them for the indicated length of time, even if all symptoms and signs of infection are gone. If you were not prescribed a pain medication by us but are experiencing pain after your appointment, we recommend taking over the counter pain medication. We recommend ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) or naproxen (Aleve). Should you experience discomfort that cannot be controlled with pain medications or should swelling develop, please call our office.

To further reduce pain and swelling, rinse three times a day with warm salt water; dissolve a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water, then rinse, swish, and spit. It's important to continue to brush and floss normally.

Usually, the last step after root canal treatment is the placement of a crown on the tooth. A crown covers and protects the tooth from breaking in the future. Unless otherwise noted by the dentist, it is critical to have a crown placed on your root canal treated tooth as soon as possible (usually about a month later, separate procedure with a separate fee). The major reason for failure of a root canal tooth is that people don't take the time to have the proper, final restoration placed. A crown or (cap) will strengthen the weakened tooth and hopefully help save the tooth for many years. Delay in obtaining final restoration (crown) may result in fracture and/or possible loss of the tooth. Please note, there are some cases where we will need to crown the tooth immediately

If your bite feels uneven, you have persistent pain, or you have any other questions or concerns, please call our dental office