

## PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS AFTER NON-SURGICAL ROOT CANAL TREATMENT

Please follow the instructions below to maximize your healing and minimize discomfort. If you have questions or concerns, **PLEASE ASK**.

**ANTI-INFLAMMATORY & PAIN MEDICATION:** Please take 600-800mg Ibuprofen (e.g. 3-4 tablets *Advil* or *Motrin*) with food and water every 8 hours for 3 days whether or not you have pain. If you have discomfort longer than 3 days, take 800mg of Ibuprofen every 6-8 hours as needed for pain. If you need Ibuprofen longer than 7 days, please consult the doctor. Ibuprofen, an anti-inflammatory medication, can assist your healing, but with chronic use may increase risks of stomach ulcers and generalized bleeding problems. Patients who take aspirin regularly should take 2x325mg aspirin three times per day for 3 days instead of the Ibuprofen.

**ADDITIONAL PAIN MEDICATION:** If your discomfort is not managed by Ibuprofen alone, take 2 tablets of Extra Strength Tylenol, ideally 3-4 hours after taking the Ibuprofen (or sooner if needed). Ibuprofen and Tylenol are different types of pain relievers that can be used in conjunction with one another for a short period of time. Stronger pain relievers such as Vicoden or Vicoprofen may be prescribed and taken in addition to modified Ibuprofen and Extra Strength Tylenol dosages to alleviate extreme discomfort. Please avoid consuming alcohol while taking pain medications.

**EATING:** Please avoid sticky, tough or hard foods, instead eat soft foods and chew on the opposite side of your mouth. It is important to maintain the seal of your temporary filling or crown and to prevent your tooth from fracturing before your general dentist has restored your tooth with a core filling and crown.

**BRUSHING & FLOSSING:** Unless the doctor has instructed you differently, please brush twice and floss once daily. Good oral hygiene home care is important and will prevent cavities on the root canal treated tooth and your other teeth.

**ANTIBIOTICS:** The doctor does not generally prescribe antibiotics for every root canal. Unnecessary use of antibiotics may increase your risk of developing strains of bacteria resistant to that antibiotic. If you are prescribed antibiotics, please take them as directed. Starting and stopping antibiotic use can make your infection worse; therefore, once started, take as directed and take until gone.

**ALLERGIC REACTION:** An allergic reaction may present as itching, hives, rash, or difficulty breathing. If you have an allergic reaction to any medication, please discontinue the medication and contact the doctor immediately. If you have difficulty breathing, call 911 immediately.

**BIRTH CONTROL PILLS & ANTIBIOTICS:** Antibiotics kill bacteria in the stomach that are needed to absorb the birth control pills into the body. If you take birth control pills, ask any doctor prescribing you a medication if it is an antibiotic. If it is, please use alternative methods of birth control and do NOT rely on your birth control pills during the time of antibiotic use and for the greater of one menstrual cycle for 2 weeks following cessation of antibiotic use.

**FLARE UPS:** Approximately 5% of patients have problems associated with root canal treatment, including extreme pain, swelling, and fever. If after treatment, you have these aforementioned symptoms or pressure in the bone (feeling like a growing balloon), please call the doctor immediately and place an ice pack on your face near the treated area.

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