



ROOT CANAL

Overview

A root canal is a treatment to repair and save a badly damaged or infected tooth. The procedure involves removing the damaged area of the tooth (the pulp), cleaning and disinfecting it and then filling and sealing it. The common causes affecting the pulp are a cracked tooth, a deep cavity, repeated dental treatment to the tooth or trauma. The term "root canal" comes from cleaning of the canals inside the tooth's root.

What to expect during a ROOT CANAL

If you think you need a root canal, consult your dentist. There are a number of steps that occur over a few office visits.

1. X-ray – if a dentist suspects you may need a root canal, he will first take X-rays or examine existing X-rays to show where the decay is located.
2. Anesthesia – local anesthesia is administered to the affected tooth. Contrary to popular belief, a root canal is no more painful than a filling.
3. Pulpotomy – an opening is made and the diseased tooth pulp is removed.
4. Filling – the roots that have been opened (to get rid of the disease pulp) are filled with gutta-percha material and sealed off with cement. You then need to have a permanent filling to build the tooth back up, and then a crown for enforcement of the strength of the tooth.