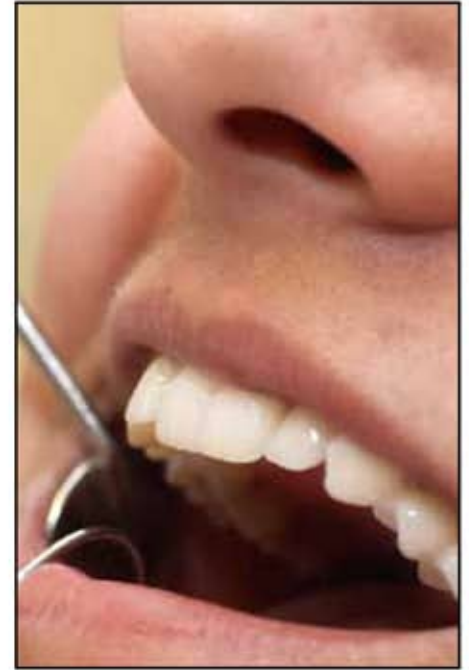


Endodontic Treatment

What is endodontic treatment?

“Endo” is the Greek word for “inside” and “odont” is Greek for “tooth”. Endodontic treatment treats the inside of the tooth.

To understand endodontic treatment, it helps to know something about the anatomy of the tooth. Inside the tooth, under the white enamel and a hard layer called the dentin, is a soft tissue called the pulp. The pulp contains blood vessels, nerves and connective tissue, and creates the surrounding hard tissues of the tooth during development. The pulp extends from the crown of the tooth to the tip of the roots where it connects to the tissues surrounding the root. The pulp is important during a tooth's growth and development. However, once a tooth is fully mature it can survive without the pulp, because the tooth continues to be nourished by the tissues surrounding it.



Who performs endodontic treatment?

All dentists, including your general dentist, received training in endodontic treatment in dental school. General dentists can perform endodontic procedures along with other dental procedures, but they often refer patients needing endodontic treatment to endodontists. Endodontists are dentists with special training in endodontic procedures. They provide only endodontic services in their practices because they are specialists who have completed an additional two or more years of advanced training in endodontics after graduating from dental school.

Why would I need an endodontic procedure?

Endodontic treatment is necessary when the pulp becomes inflamed or infected. The inflammation or infection can have a variety of causes: deep decay, repeated dental procedures on the tooth, or a crack or chip in the tooth. In addition, a blow to a tooth may cause pulp damage even if the tooth has no visible chips or cracks. The pulp can become inflamed or infection can occur if such an injury is left untreated. This can cause pain or lead to an abscess. Signs of pulp damage include pain, prolonged sensitivity to heat or cold, discoloration of the tooth, and swelling and tenderness in the nearby gums. Sometimes, there are no symptoms.

How does endodontic treatment save the tooth?

The endodontist removes the inflamed or infected pulp, carefully cleans and shapes the inside of the tooth, then fills and seals the space. Afterwards, you will return to your regular dentist, who will place a crown or other restoration on the tooth to protect and restore it to full function. After restoration, the tooth continues to function like any other tooth.

More than 14 million teeth receive endodontic treatment each year. By choosing endodontic treatment, you are choosing to keep your natural teeth as a healthy foundation for chewing and biting for years to come.