

*Your Teeth  
Can Be Saved*



*Endodontic  
Treatment*

Root Canal

## Why do I need root canal treatment?

Root canal treatment can help save your damaged tooth. When the pulp (the soft tissue inside the tooth that contains nerves and blood and lymph vessels) is diseased or injured and unable to repair itself, the pulp dies. The most common cause of pulp death is a fractured tooth or a deep cavity, which can expose the pulp to the bacteria found in saliva. The bacteria cause infection inside the tooth. If the damaged or diseased pulp is not removed, the tooth and surrounding tissues become infected. Without treatment, your tooth could eventually have to be removed. If the problem is caught early enough, however, your dentist can save your tooth using root canal treatment.

## Why did I get an abscess?

What do I do if I get an abscess? When the pulp of a tooth becomes infected (often from a deep cavity or a deep crack), the infection can spread throughout the pulp. If root canal treatment is not done, the infection may travel into the tissues near the root tip. This can cause the adjacent bone to erode. The pocket of pus that forms is the abscess. If the abscess increases in size, it can become more painful.



An endodontic procedure or root canal is actually a specialized filling. When the nerve (pulp tissue) of the tooth is damaged and is dead or dying, it is cleaned out of the tooth. The area which the nerve once occupied is enlarged and a special filling is placed to seal it off. The main difference between a regular tooth and an endodontically treated tooth is that without the internal tissue in the tooth, it becomes brittle and must be restored with a crown to remain strong in most situations.