

## Stourcote Dental Practice

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- All about root canal treatment



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## ● Looking after your teeth

Remember - you only get one set of adult teeth but by taking good care of your teeth and gums, you're also more likely to keep more of your adult teeth for life. This means that you'll maintain the same ability to eat and drink, and be able to show off a healthy, natural smile.

You can work easily with your dental team to take care of your teeth throughout the whole of your life. Simple things like taking a few minutes of your time everyday to brush and clean between your teeth can really make a difference in reducing the daily damage that can be done to your mouth.

Regular visits to your dental team can then help you to identify any factors that

could place your dental health at risk, allowing you to make small changes to your lifestyle to combat this, and stop dental problems before they start.

Keeping your mouth healthy relies on regular professional advice and guidance, combined with an effective home care routine. This combined preventive approach focuses on keeping teeth and gums healthy for life and reduces the likelihood of needing more expensive, complex, and possibly painful dental treatments or emergency care in the future.

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## ● All about root canal treatment

### What is root canal treatment and when is it necessary?

Root canal treatment (also called 'endodontics') is needed when the blood or nerve supply of the tooth (called the 'pulp') is infected through decay or injury. You may not feel any pain in the early stages of the infection. In some cases your tooth could darken in colour, which may mean that the nerve of the tooth has died (or is dying). This would need root canal treatment.

### Why is root canal treatment needed?

If the pulp becomes infected, the infection may spread through the root canal system of the tooth. This may eventually lead to an abscess. An abscess is an inflamed area in which pus collects and can cause swelling of the tissues around the tooth. The symptoms of an abscess can range from a dull ache to severe pain, and the tooth may be tender when you bite. If root canal treatment is not done, the infection will spread and the tooth may need to be taken out.

### What does the treatment involve?

The aim of the treatment is to remove all the infection from the root canal. The root is then cleaned and filled to prevent any further infection.

Root canal treatment is a skilled and time-consuming procedure. Most courses of treatment will involve two or more visits to your dentist.

At the first appointment, the infected pulp is removed and any abscesses can be drained. The root canal is then cleaned and shaped ready for the filling. A temporary filling is put in and the tooth is left to settle.

The tooth is checked at a later visit and when all the infection has cleared, the tooth is permanently filled.

### Is root canal treatment safe?

Your dentist is highly trained and will make sure the procedure is very safe. As you can imagine, root canal treatment is a very skilled procedure which takes time to complete. Rare complications can include broken files or damage to the roots caused by the files or drills used.

### What happens next

Once the root has been treated, your tooth will be like any other. You must ensure you brush your teeth twice a day (for at least two minutes each time) with fluoridated toothpaste and that you also use aids such as floss and interdental brushes, as advised.

