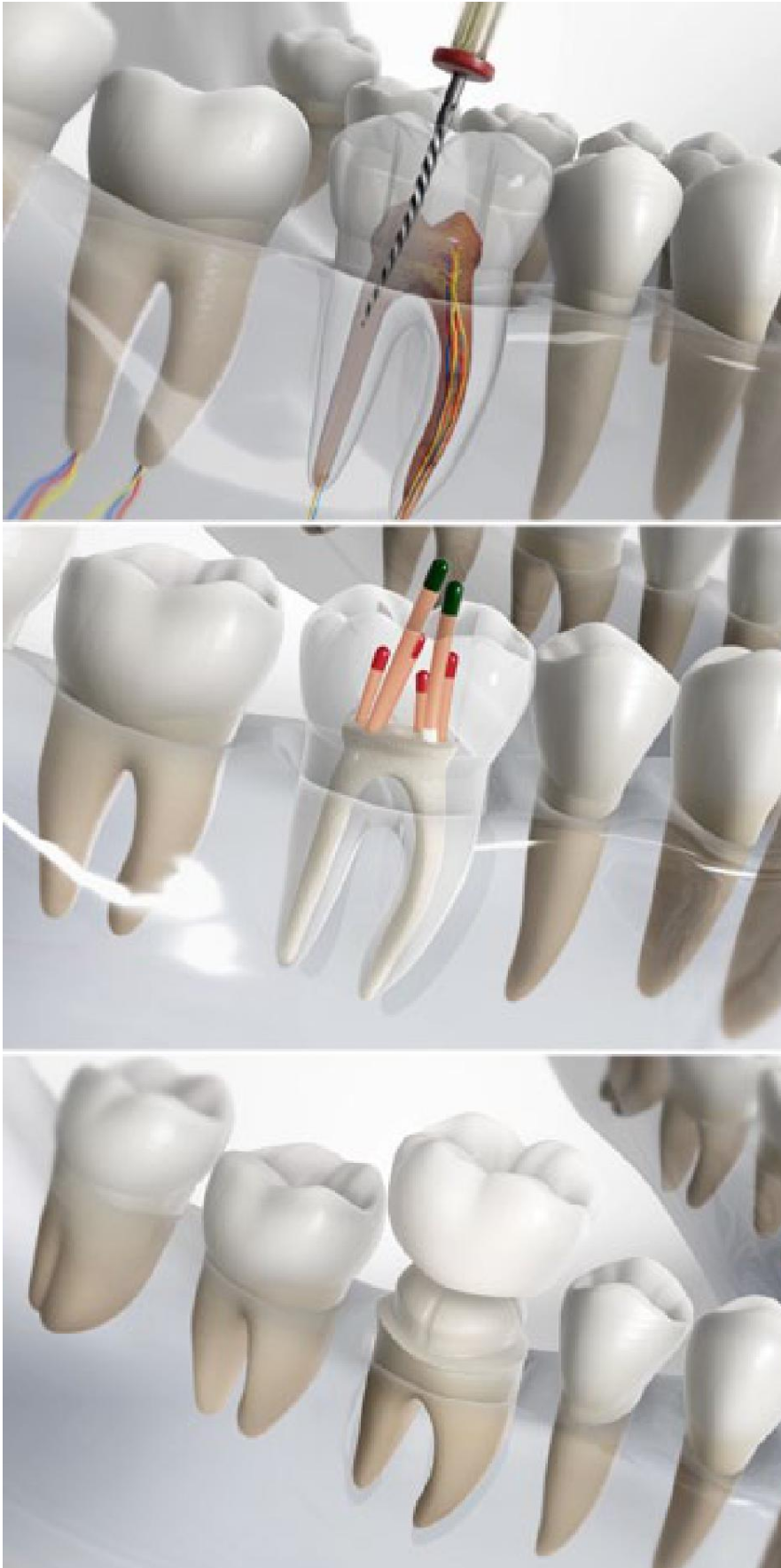




## Root Canal (Endodontic Treatment)



### Overview

This procedure treats an infection deep inside your tooth, in the soft tissue called "pulp." A root canal can save even a badly damaged tooth. Your root canal may be done by your general dentist, but more complicated cases are often done by a specialist. And you may need to schedule more than one visit.

### Preparation

During your first visit, the dentist takes X-ray images of your tooth. That's to see how badly your tooth is damaged. Then, you're given anesthetic. This numbs your tooth so you won't feel any pain.

### Removing the pulp

Next, an opening is made in your tooth to reach the pulp chamber. That's the space in the center of your tooth filled with pulp, nerves and blood vessels. The chamber's canals extend all the way through your tooth's roots. The dentist uses tiny instruments to carefully clean out the infected pulp from the center of the tooth and from each root.

### Treating the infection

At this point, your tooth may be packed with medication and closed with a temporary filling. The medicine will help clear up your infection. You may be given a prescription for antibiotics and sent home to give the medicine time to work.

### Final step

When you return for your next visit, you are numbed and the temporary filling is removed. The empty pulp chamber and canals are filled with a sealant. It will harden to protect the inside of your tooth. The opening in your tooth is closed with a permanent filling. You may need a crown or other procedure to fully stabilize your tooth.

### Conclusion

After your root canal, your tooth will feel and perform just like your other teeth. With proper care, it can last a lifetime. Talk to your dentist for more information.