



# Longborough DENTAL PRACTICE

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ENDODONTICS AT  
Longborough DENTAL PRACTICE

## ROOT CANAL TREATMENT AT LONGBOROUGH

### Why does my Tooth need Root Canal Treatment?

A tooth generally needs a root canal procedure because the pulpal tissue (the 'nerve') inside the tooth has become irreversibly damaged. The pulp may become inflamed or may die if either there is significant decay in a tooth, if there is a large restoration (filling or crown) or if the tooth has been subjected to trauma.

The inflamed pulp may cause toothache or remain pain-free. When the pulp dies, the space it inhabits (the root canal) can rapidly become infected with bacteria. This may cause pain and swelling in the supporting tissues (abscess) or the tooth may remain symptom-free.

Root canal treatment is directed towards removing inflamed or abscessed tissue. The root canal system, especially in molars, is often complex and difficult to clean well. This is why many general dentists prefer to refer these cases to an Endodontist who has the training, specialised equipment and experience to deal with them well.

### What is Root Canal Treatment?

During a root canal the Endodontist will make a small hole in the crown of the tooth and remove the pulp tissue or existing root canal filling which is infected by bacteria.

The pulp chamber and the tooth root canals are then cleaned (sometimes referred to as 'removing the nerve') and disinfected to reduce the number of bacteria and allow healing. Root canal therapy requires one or two visits to complete, depending on the extent of the infection.

Once the root canal system has been sealed with a root canal filling, a protective crown may be required to prevent the tooth from fracture, so that it can be retained as a healthy and functional member of the dental arch.

*Accessory canals often cause complications during root canal treatment. Advances in technology like microscopes and filling techniques are successfully used to treat these complications.*

Root canal treatment has not always been as successful as it is today. Fortunately the guiding principles of modern Endodontics can now be utilised to deliver very predictable results over years of a patients lifetime.

Endodontists are specifically trained dentists who have a great deal of experience and use specialised equipment in order to treat difficult root canal systems and retreat teeth where previous root canal treatments have failed.

Endodontists are able to use techniques to reduce patient discomfort and anxiety during the treatment. Most patients will experience no discomfort during or after the procedure, a minority of patients may experience a little soreness after the procedure which will resolve within 48 hours, this can be reduced by taking painkillers during this period.

Currently, we can expect success rates of over 90% for first time root canal treatments performed by an Endodontist. The success rate is reduced to about 75 - 80% when an existing root treatment needs redoing if it has failed.

Some cases may need further treatment in order to eradicate the infection successfully. If root canal treatment fails, a surgical procedure (root end surgery) might be necessary in order to treat the infection successfully.

