

What to Look For in an Endodontist:

How to Pick the Right Provider for Your Root Canal

1. Seek a dental provider that is resource-rich



Dentists performing root canals have the complex task of removing the tooth pulp to prevent tooth infection and inflammation. Tooth preservation is the ultimate goal, and to accurately identify the source of decay or disease within the tooth's interior advanced technology must be used for diagnostic purposes and treatment planning. Dental teaching schools have the unique advantage of being the first to know and implement the newest techniques. Research is prized in this sort of environment, and teaching schools take a team approach to the dental practice. Every imaginable expertise is within an arm's reach, so that highly individualized cases with rare complications can be safely and effectively addressed. When considering if a dental school is the right option for your root canal, ask yourself what sort of environment best suits you and your dental needs.

2. Expect to receive a clear and thorough plan for treatment



The most significant indicator that will help you determine if a provider is a good fit will happen during your initial consultation. In order to receive a diagnosis, you will seek an evaluation where you will get a chance to interact with the dentist and, in the case of a dental school, with pre-and post-doctoral dental students. This is your chance to talk through your medical history, concerns, and preferences in-depth. In some cases, more than one treatment plan may be an option, but for the most part only one solution will come highly recommended. Feel free to ask questions about the qualifications of the dentists and for clarification on any logistics of the procedure. Ask yourself whether you prefer a team approach to your root canal, and if you are willing to contribute to the education of pre-and post-doctoral dental students

3. Look for the use of top-notch equipment



Root canals are remarkable for their precision. In the procedure, the inside of the tooth canal is restored. Some challenges dentists encounter include an incompletely developed tooth in younger patients, shaping narrow canals, and working with thin dentin tooth walls. The bite or anatomy of a patient's teeth can also prove difficult. To achieve an accurate restoration of the patient's natural teeth, preprocedure research and treatment will be thoroughly completed using: operating microscopes, digital imaging, ultrasonic instrumentation, and ultrasonic fiber optics. Don't feel shy about asking for more information about the types of equipment your dentist will be using and why they use those tools.

4. Prioritize personalized care



Not often talked about is the fact that the need for a root canal can happen at any time. It can crop up unexpectedly with urgency. When this happens, you need a dental team that has the resources to put your treatment first. Each patient's needs are different, and treatment and recovery experiences will vary between individuals. It is important that your dentist advocates for a customized plan that accommodates your availability, preferences, and unique set of oral health risks. Take the time to ask follow up questions about the state of your teeth and what specific steps they will take to improve its condition.

5. Gain a return-on-investment (ROI)



The standard best practice in any dental practice is saving an individual's natural teeth whenever possible. The American Association of Endodontists, the American Academy of Periodontology, and the American College of Prosthodontists agree! There is evidence that preserving teeth is correlated with better patient outcomes, results in a stronger oral structure, and sustains a patient's oral health. A root canal is a comprehensive procedure with a high return on investment because of its permanence. Once the procedure is completed, the tooth will not become infected again because the pulp has been removed and the tooth is newly protected while being resealed with a crown. As with any procedure, you should weigh the risks and benefits of the treatment with your dentist and should choose the best solution for your teeth together.

