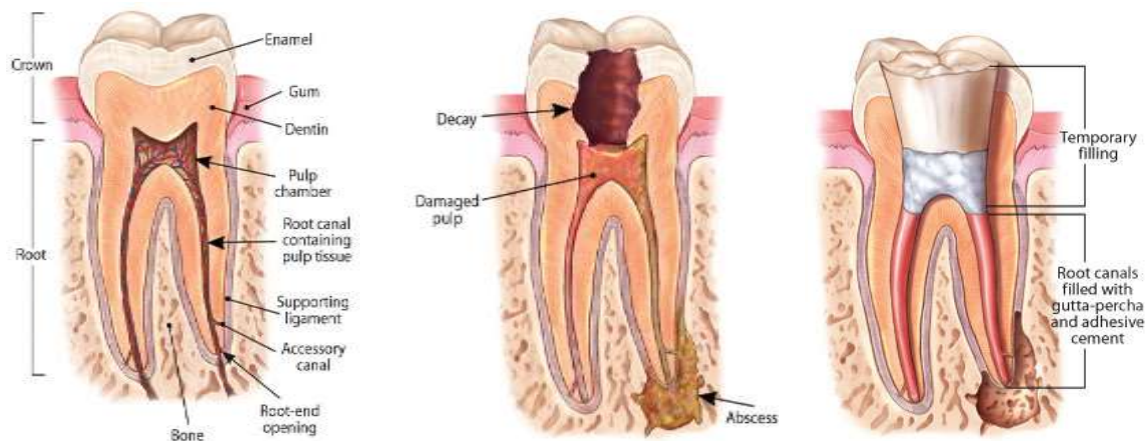


Dr:o<TALK: Root Canal Therapy (ENDODONTIC)

The term “root canal” has become fashionable word now in public. In dentistry, it is called “endodontic” which mean inside the tooth (“endo” means inside and “donic” means tooth). It was started more than 1 century ago since the 1st RCT was performed by Dr Walkhoff in 1895. With the modern technique, equipment and material now, the stigma of fear and pain of having RCT done to save and restore the tooth is fast disappearing.



Many of our patients still wonder what is RCT is all about? It is a simple, but yet it is a complex procedure of removing the dental pulp. In every tooth, there is a space (sterile chamber). The space houses dental pulp (connective tissue, nerve, and blood vessel). When the pulp is contaminated from bacteria (from caries/ crack) or heat (from dental procedure), the tissue undergoes inflammation and this can lead to necrosis. When this happened, the symptom will show as pain or sensitivity.

According to 1986 survey by JADA, over 62% of adult would choose RCT over the extraction. Most dentist would agree that retained and restore individual tooth is better than any bridge, implant, or partial denture replacement, which, in turn is superior to a full denture. Although the recent success of implant is impressive, the long outcome is not known, and functionally, the natural tooth is always superior! Even in the young children having a RCT will have a long term benefit than just by simply extracting the deciduous teeth.

Finally, there are many myths regarding root canal; is RCT SAFE and how long it's LAST? Although there are many articles/statements on the internet claimed that RCT is toxic; this is absolutely not true! Over 6 million RCT is performed worldwide every year, yet there is no single incidence of death is reported due to RCT failure, procedure or side effect, and properly done RCT has greater than 90% success rate. I have seen many of my root canal that was done 15 years ago are still asymptomatic; with the tooth is fully functional as it was nothing ever happened or done to that tooth!



As it is shown at this figure A & B photograph, the decision was made to restore the broken down tooth by doing RCT and crown instead of extraction and implant. And yes, it is still there 15 years later; fully functional and symptom free.