

Apicoectomy

In cases where the infection at the end of the tooth root will not heal upon completion of a root canal treatment, it becomes necessary to address this area with a surgical procedure. An apicoectomy may be performed after a root canal procedure fails to stop the progression of infection around the affected tooth and the jaw. This is often the last measure available to save the tooth. To prevent the infection from progressing, a small incision is made in the gum tissue above the affected tooth. The gum tissue is pushed back, and a small portion of bone overlying the root of the tooth is removed to give access to the infected area. The tip of the root is then removed along with the associated infected tissue. Often a filling is placed in the root end to provide an additional seal. Once this is done, the affected area is flushed with sterile water to remove any final debris and the gum tissue is stitched closed. Healing of the bone around the remaining root can begin once the infection has been removed. This process may take several months, during which the progress is followed closely.