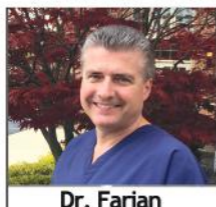


# ***From the Dentist***



**Dr. Farian**

## **Why Did My Root Canal Fail?**

Root canal therapy is routinely performed on teeth with significant damage or decay. This procedure is necessary whenever bacteria invade the pulp of a tooth. During this treatment, the nerves, blood vessels, and infected tissues are removed from inside the problematic tooth, and are replaced with high-quality dental materials that seal the canals and help prevent recontamination. In fact, other than an extraction, root canal therapy is the only way to halt the progression of a bacterial infection.

Touting an overall success rate of 97 percent and a lifespan of several decades, it can be incredibly frustrating when root canal therapy fails. Dr. Zenon Farian explains why this can occur and explores ways to address the problem and maintain your smile for many years to come.

### **Reason #1: Root Fracture**

Fissures and cracks in the root of a tooth can be extremely difficult to detect. However, if they are present, the canal cannot fully seal as intended. As a result, the tooth can become re-infected and lead to discomfort, sensitivity, or swelling. In general, older patients are more susceptible to breakage and fractures. Therefore, if you underwent root canal therapy many years ago and you are starting to notice problems, age could be a factor.

### **Reason #2: Obstruction of a Canal**

In order to clean out the canals during treatment, your dentist must use tiny specialized instruments. It is possible that a canal could become unintentionally obstructed due to a broken file or dental material. When this happens, it is impossible to reach the ends of the canals and clean them appropriately. As a result, the tooth could become re-infected.

### **Reason #3: Undetected Canal Branches**

Every tooth is unique. In fact, some of them have more canals than expected. For example, a three-rooted molar can have four canals, some of which are hidden behind others. Depending on their precise location, these extra canals may not be clearly observable on a dental x-ray. In the event that one of these canals remains untreated due to visibility issues, an infection can eventually develop.

### **What Are My Treatment Options?**

No matter what the reason for your failed root canal procedure, there are ways to address the problem. The most common treatments include:

- Retreatment with a second root canal procedure
- Apicoectomy, in which the tip of the affected root is removed
- Extraction of the affected tooth and immediate placement of an implant
- Extraction of the affected tooth

Your dentist can help you weigh risks vs benefits and determine which option is right for you. To learn more about root canals and why they fail, reach out to Farian Dental Care at (440) 526-9100.

*Keep Smiling! And make it a good one!*

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