

Pulpotomy




Why would my child need a Pulpotomy?

- A baby tooth is smaller than an adult tooth, so decay can spread quickly.
- Where the decay is deep and near the nerve of the tooth but the tooth can be saved, a pulpotomy can be done.
- This is where the infected tissue in a baby tooth is removed, and medicine is placed inside the tooth.
- After this, a stainless steel crown is placed on the tooth to protect it.

What is the Success Rate?

The success rate is dependent on how affected the tooth was to start with. It is important you tell the therapist if there has been any sensitivity or pain from this tooth. Where there is extensive damage and pain, or an abscess (gum boil) is present, the tooth would need to be extracted.

Pulpotomy Procedure

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| Step 1 | The dental professional will make sure your child feels comfortable in the dental chair. | |
| Step 2 | To numb the gums and allow for a painless local anaesthetic, topical anaesthetic is placed on the gum. It is then kept on the gum for about a minute. | |
| Step 3 | Local anaesthetic is then injected into the gum. We use Lignocaine or Articaine (see "materials we use"). | |
| Step 4 | A rubber dam is used if possible. This is a sheet of rubber that has holes in it, it allows for the tooth being worked on, to poke through and be isolated from the rest of the mouth. The rubber is held in place by a metal ring around the tooth. A rubber dam reduces saliva moisture, protects the soft tissues, and helps keep the airway safe. | |
| Step 5 | The cavity is cleaned with dental drills. The deep decay is removed, and this leads down to the pulp. The pulp is cleaned, and this is where the nerve and blood supply are located. |  |
| Step 6 | Medicine is placed onto the pulp to stop it from bleeding. |  |
| Step 7 | The tooth is trimmed down to allow for a crown to fit over the tooth. A stainless steel crown is placed and cemented on, and the bite checked. |  |
| Step 8 | The stainless steel crown remains on the tooth, until the baby tooth naturally wiggles out. | |

What happens next?

There is a chance that an infection may develop underneath the tooth. The tooth needs to be checked by a dental professional and x-rays taken at 6 monthly reviews.

For information about free dental care for under 18s:

Visit: www.HealthNZ.govt.nz/BeeHealthy Call: 0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)

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