

## Do Baby Teeth Need Root Canals?



If a child has a damaged tooth, the Pediatric Dentist may recommend a Root Canal (***Partial Root Canal- Pulpotomy or Complete Root Canal- Pulpectomy***). While root canals in children might seem over the top, they are routine procedures that can help save a child's teeth.

### What is a baby root canal?

When a baby tooth (*most often the molars*) has a very deep cavity that affects part of the pulp (*which contains the blood and nerve supply of the tooth*), it will most likely need pulp treatment most commonly referred to as a baby root canal. This procedure involves removing part of or the complete pulp (*depending on the extent of the infection in the pulp*) and placing a medicated material over it. The tooth is then covered with a crown (*"cap"*, usually a *Stainless Steel Crown*) which is a more long-lasting restoration for the baby tooth till it naturally exfoliates and gives way to its permanent successor.

## Are root canals safe for kids?

Yes. Performed properly, baby root canals are safe for children. The materials used in the procedure are biocompatible with the body and do not cause harm.

## Are baby root canals necessary for children or should they be avoided?

In children with primary teeth, a root canal may be necessary, unless the tooth is about to fall out. It is important to seek help as soon as a child shows symptoms of:

- Teeth sensitivity to hot or cold food and beverages
- Toothache while eating (*i.e on presence of stimuli*)
- Spontaneous sharp tooth pain (*i.e even without any stimuli*)
- A broken or traumatized tooth.

Taking a child to the Pediatric Dentist immediately after he or she starts noticing or complaining about one of these symptoms gives the Pediatric Dentist a better chance of stopping the problem before it spreads further.

Restoring baby teeth is critical as they are vital for speaking and chewing, maintain a child's smile and hold the spaces for the permanent teeth.