



# Helping Hands

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## WHAT IS A PULPOTOMY?

A pulpotomy is needed when there is a significant sized cavity that has affected the nerve of the tooth. A pulpotomy is the complete removal of the infected portion of the nerve of the tooth. The goal of this procedure is to remove the infected part of the nerve, but to maintain the healthy and vital portion of the nerve. Once the infection has been removed and hemorrhage has been controlled, a white sticky medicated material is then placed in the chamber of the tooth to take the place of the missing nerve. If the entire nerve and blood vessels are removed from the tooth, the procedure is called a pulpectomy. The tooth is then covered with a crown. If the tooth is located in the back of the mouth it will receive a stainless steel crown. If it is located in the front of the mouth it will receive a white crown or a silver crown with a white facing, depending on the size of the initial cavity. The crown is put in place with a special type of tooth cement. In certain limited cases we are unable to determine the extent of infection present in the tooth. In these cases, the pulp therapy may fail and require the extraction of the tooth. However, a pulpotomy can be an effective way to save a badly infected tooth.

Once the procedure is complete your child may need to take some type of pain reliever such as Children's Motrin or Children's Tylenol. The tissues around the crown may bleed and be sensitive for some time. This is very normal and you should not be alarmed. It is also highly recommended that your child should be careful eating sticky things like caramels and taffy, as these things may pull the crown off of the tooth. If the crown does come off, save the crown and call our office as soon as possible to make an appointment. It is very important that you do this as soon as your know the crown has come off. The tooth under the crown is sensitive and is prone to decay and we will want to re-cement the crown to prevent the nerve chamber from becoming infected again.

