

Dispelling Myths of Root Canals Through Education

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CHICAGO, March 24, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- When it comes to their teeth, Americans have strong feelings about keeping them. According to a January 2011 survey by the American Association of Endodontists, 70 percent of Americans want to avoid losing their natural teeth. One way to help people maintain their natural teeth is through root canal treatment. During Root Canal Awareness Week, March 27 - April 2, the American Association of Endodontists wants to dispel the negative myths surrounding this dental treatment and encourage patients who need a root canal to see an endodontist who will skillfully provide this treatment.

"Nothing looks, feels or functions as well as your natural teeth. Choosing to save a tooth with root canal treatment will help you sustain your ability to bite and chew and maintain the natural appearance of your smile," said AAE President Dr. Clara M. Spatafore.

More than 15 million root canals are performed each year in the U.S., and the vast majority of root canal patients - 89 percent - say they were satisfied when they received treatment from an endodontist, a dentist who specializes in root canals. And yet 70 percent of U.S. respondents in the AAE's recent survey also said they feared having a root canal.

"Ironically, when patients have an infected tooth, a root canal is the very procedure that can save it," said Dr. Spatafore. "Many patients do not realize that, just like any other medical specialty, significant advances in technology have enabled endodontists to perform root canals safely and comfortably."

Endodontists are dentists who have completed at least two additional years of American Dental Association-approved advanced specialty education and training in the diagnosis and treatment of tooth pain. Their practice is focused on preserving natural teeth, mostly through performing root canal treatment.

AAE research shows that patients who have experienced root canal treatment are si
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Published on Medical Design Technology (<http://www.mdtmag.com>)

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