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root of the first molar had a pulpal wall intrusion for 1, 2, or 3 weeks. Pulpal tissue was sampled and processed for light microscopy. Pulp cell classes were identified, and pulp surface areas were measured by planimetry. Pulpal responses were assessed by the presence and location of inflammatory cell infiltrates on the pulpal surface, and by assaying for protease activity. Pulp surface areas decreased significantly 1 week following pulpal incisions and wall intrusions, but returned to control levels by 3 weeks. Subcellular class composition was not altered by incision or intrusion. Cell types with high metabolic potential were present in the 1- and 2-week pulp samples. Pulpal protease activity was less when incisions were