

Dental Implants



Life's simple pleasures can cause problems and pain for the millions of adults who suffer from permanent tooth loss.

Men and women of all ages are self-conscious about their dentures, bridges or missing teeth. Some have difficulty speaking because their dentures slip or click.

For others, the irritation and pain caused by dentures are constant reminders of the limitations they feel. Many are concerned about their appearance and may feel that their tooth loss has "aged them" before their time.

Some regularly decline invitations to social events because they are unwilling to face the uncertainties of eating, speaking and laughing in public. Many can no longer enjoy their favorite foods, nor the social interaction with family and friends that accompanies special meals.

A UNIQUE SOLUTION TO A TROUBLESOME PROBLEM

Now, more and more people are putting an end to these problems by choosing dental implants, a revolutionary way to replace missing teeth. Dental implants offer an excellent alternative to the limitations of conventional dentures, bridges and missing teeth.

Dental implants are changing the way people live. With them, people are rediscovering the comfort and confidence to eat, speak, laugh and enjoy life.

WHY ARE PEOPLE CHOOSING DENTAL IMPLANTS?

A national survey of oral and maxillofacial surgeons found that patient interest and demand has grown significantly.

The survey found:

- Dental implant use has nearly tripled since 1986 and is expected to continue to rise rapidly
- People of all ages are turning to dental implants to replace a single tooth, several teeth or a full set of dentures
- Leading reasons cited for choosing dental implants are:
 - to restore normal eating and speaking abilities
 - to enhance facial appearance and confidence
 - to increase denture retention

According to the survey, the reasons for the increased demand are:

- Growing public awareness of the significant functional and esthetic advantages of dental implants over conventional dentures and bridges
- The availability of data on the long-term success of dental implants

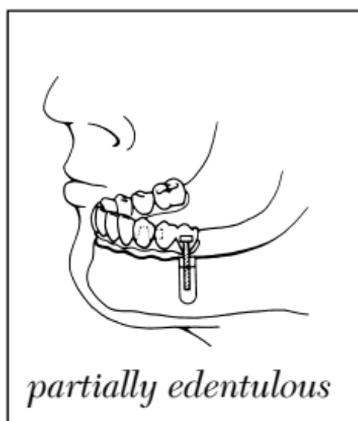
Experts predict that the demand for the procedure will continue to grow as people become more familiar with the benefits of dental implants.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO NATURAL TEETH

Dental implants are a great option for patients missing natural teeth, because they act as a secure anchor for artificial

replacement teeth and eliminate the instability associated with surface adhesives and removable bridges.

Your natural teeth absorb biting pressure of up to 540 lbs. per square inch. Long-time denture-wearers can often absorb no more than 50 lbs. per square inch. Dental implants, when properly placed, can withstand 450 lbs. per square inch of biting pressure.



Dental implants are made of materials that are compatible with human bone and tissue. The subperiosteal implants are surgically placed directly into the jawbone. Small posts are then attached to the implants which protrude through the gums. These posts provide stable anchors for artificial replacement teeth.

Dental Implants Fit Patient Needs.

Based on patient needs, a single tooth, a partial bridge or a full set of replacement teeth are fitted to the implants and locked in place over the protruding posts. In appearance and in function, implants are the closest thing to natural teeth and a good alternative to conventional dentures.

Implants eliminate the day-to-day frustrations and pain of ill-fitting dentures. They allow people to enjoy a healthy and varied diet without the restrictions many denture wearers face. With a sense of renewed self-confidence, many people rediscover the excitement of an active lifestyle shared with family and friends and the chance to speak clearly and comfortably with co-workers.

For all these reasons, people with dental implants often say they feel better . . . they look better . . . they live better.

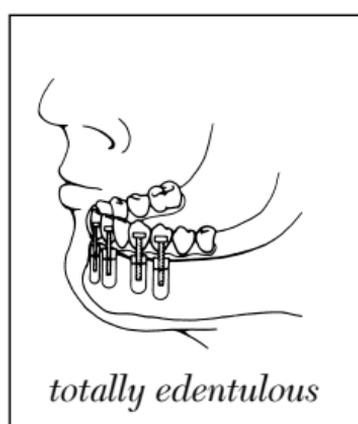
WHAT TO EXPECT

An oral and maxillofacial surgeon can determine if you are a candidate for dental implants. You will be evaluated based upon a number of things including dental health, life-style, jawbone quality and oral hygiene habits. In close consultation with your own dentist, the oral and maxillofacial surgeon can plan your dental implant treatment program.

Dental implant surgery is often done in an oral and maxillofacial surgeon's office. In some cases, the procedure is done in a hospital or ambulatory surgery center. In any event, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon can determine the most appropriate setting based on your individual needs.

A Two-Phase Procedure. For most patients, the placement of dental implants involves two surgical procedures. First, the implants are surgically placed into your jawbone. These small devices make up the framework needed to securely hold replacement teeth. For the first three to six months following surgery, the implants are beneath the surface of the gums, gradually bonding with the jawbone. During this time, you should be able to wear temporary dentures and eat a soft diet.

Some patients do report minor pain and swelling immediately after the procedure



but most experience no change in their daily routines.

While the implants are bonding with the jawbone, new replacement teeth are fashioned by your dentist. The replacement teeth must clip onto the implants, fit securely in the mouth and withstand the day-to-day movement and pressure created by chewing and speaking. So, it is important that they are created by a dentist with proper training in restorative techniques.

Once the implants have bonded to the jawbone, the second phase of the procedure begins. At this time, the oral and maxillofacial surgeon uncovers the implants and attaches small posts which will act as anchors for the artificial teeth. The posts protrude through the gumline but are not visible when artificial teeth are attached.

The entire process, from evaluation to completion, generally takes six to eight months. During this time, most patients do not experience any disruption in their normal business and social activities.

Because dental implants are made of materials that are compatible with human bone, there is little chance for an allergic reaction in the body. However, implants can fail when proper oral hygiene techniques are not used. Dental implants require special individual care. Proper brushing, flossing, rinsing and regular check-ups are critical to the long-term success of your implants.

A TEAM EFFORT

Though dental implants are a relatively simple procedure, they generally warrant the expertise of two dental professionals—an oral and maxillofacial surgeon and a restorative dentist.

Working as a team, the oral and maxillofacial surgeon and restorative dentist can determine if you are a candidate for implants and design an appropriate treatment plan. A restorative dentist, with training in dental implants, creates the replacement teeth. The doctor prepares the necessary molds and works with a dental laboratory to make sure that the denture or bridge will meet the particular needs of each patient. Additionally, dental implant patients should see a dentist for routine follow-up care and maintenance.

An oral and maxillofacial surgeon is a dental specialist who surgically treats the mouth and jaw area. Following dental school, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon completes several additional years of training in a hospital residency program and is trained to administer and monitor all types of anesthesia needed for oral and maxillofacial surgery procedures.

START A NEW WAY OF LIVING TODAY

If you are among the millions of Americans who suffer from permanent tooth loss, you can eliminate the problems and pain caused by dentures, bridges or missing teeth. You can begin to rediscover the joy of eating healthy, speaking clearly and laughing comfortably.

Take the first step. Get the facts about dental implants. See your dentist or a member of the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. With their training and expertise, they can determine if dental implants are right for you. ●



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