

Dental Implant Patient Guide

Thank you for choosing our practice for your dental implant treatment! This guide provides essential information about dental implants, their benefits, and what to expect during the process.

What is a Dental Implant?

A dental implant is a titanium post surgically placed in your jawbone to serve as an artificial tooth root. Over time, it fuses with the bone in a process called osseointegration. Once healed, a crown, bridge, or denture is placed on top to restore function and aesthetics. There are three parts to an implant: the implant, the abutment, and the crown. Your surgeon will place the implant while your dentist will place the abutment and crown once the implant has healed.

Benefits of Dental Implants

- **Durability:** Implants are designed to be a long-term solution, often lasting a lifetime with proper care.
- **Natural Appearance:** They closely resemble natural teeth in both function and aesthetics.
- **Jawbone Preservation:** Implants help prevent bone loss that occurs when teeth are missing.
- **Improved Speech and Eating:** Unlike dentures, implants stay securely in place, allowing for better speech and chewing ability.
- **Comfort:** Since they integrate with the jawbone, implants eliminate discomfort associated with removable dentures.

Types of Dental Implants

- **Endosteal Implants:** The most common type, these are placed directly into the jawbone and hold a prosthetic tooth.
 - **Immediate Implants:** A subset of endosteal implants, these are placed immediately after a tooth extraction, reducing overall treatment time. This approach helps preserve bone structure and can improve aesthetics. Your surgeon will determine if you are a candidate for immediate implants.
- **All-on-4 Implants:** A full arch restoration using four strategically placed implants to support a complete denture.

The Dental Implant Process

1. Consultation & Planning

- A thorough examination, including 3D imaging, is conducted to evaluate bone health and determine the best implant option. If bone grafting is required it will be discussed at this time.
- A treatment plan is developed based on individual needs
- The entire process takes around from the time the tooth is extracted until a crown is placed can take from 6-12 months.

2. Implant Placement Surgery

- If an extraction is being performed prior to implant placement, bone graft will be placed at the time of extraction to help preserve it for your future implant. This is called socket preservation and typically requires 4-6 months to heal prior to implant placement
- The titanium implant is surgically placed into the jawbone under local anesthesia and sometimes with sedation.
- A healing period of 3-6 months is required for the implant to integrate with your bone before your dentist can begin the process of making your abutment and crown.

3. Abutment & Crown Placement

- Once healed, an abutment (connector) is attached to the implant.
- A custom-made crown, bridge, or denture is placed to restore full function.
- These will be placed by your dentist.

Caring for Your Dental Implants

- **Daily Oral Hygiene:** Brush and floss regularly to maintain gum health.
- **Routine Dental Visits:** Regular check-ups ensure long-term success.
- **Avoiding Harmful Habits:** Refrain from smoking, excessive alcohol, and chewing hard objects to prevent complications.

If you have any questions or concerns about dental implants, please contact our office.

We appreciate your trust in our care and look forward to helping you achieve a healthy, confident smile!