

FAQs about Dental Implants

What is a Dental Implant?

A dental implant is an artificial tooth root (synthetic material) that is surgically anchored into your jaw to hold a replacement tooth or bridge in place. The benefit of using implants is that they don't rely on neighboring teeth for support, they are permanent & stable. Implants are a good solution to tooth loss because they look & feel like natural teeth. Implant material is made from different types of metallic & bone-like ceramic materials that are compatible with body tissue.

Can Anyone Receive Dental Implants?

Talk with your dentist about whether you are an implant candidate. You must be in good health & have the proper bone structure & healthy gums for the implant to stay in place. People who are unable to wear dentures may also be good candidates. If you suffer from chronic problems, such as clenching or bruxism, or systemic diseases, such as diabetes, the success rate for implants decreases dramatically. Additionally, people who smoke or drink alcohol may not be good candidates.

What Can I Expect During This Procedure?

A dental specialist who is trained in implant surgery (oral surgeon or periodontist) must perform minor oral surgery to anchor the "artificial root" into or on your jaw bone. The procedure is done in the dental office with local anesthesia. Medications may be prescribed for soreness.

How Long Does the Process Take?

The process can take approximately six months to complete. Technology, however, is trying to decrease the healing time involved. Each patient heals differently, so times will vary. After the screws & posts are placed surgically, the healing process can take 4 months on average. During this time, temporary teeth can be made to wear over the healing implant. Once the implant is integrated & healed, you will return to our office for the completion of treatment. The fitting of replacement teeth takes no more than two months & does not involve any discomfort at all.

FAQs about Dental Implants (continued)

What is the Success Rate of Implants?

The success rate for implants depends on the tooth's purpose & location in the mouth. The success rate is about 95 percent for those placed in the front of the lower jaw & 85 percent for those placed in the sides & rear of the upper jaw.

How Do I Care For Implants?

Your overall health may affect the success rate of dental implants. Poor oral hygiene is a big reason why some implants fail. It is important to floss & brush around the fixtures at least twice a day, without metal objects. Your dentist will give you specific instructions on how to care for your new implants. Additional cleanings of up to four times per year may be necessary to ensure that you retain healthy gums.

Maintenance Requirements?

It is important to return for regular evaluations of the implant integrity & adjustment of the bite as your own teeth wear. Failure to do so can lead to overwhelming stress on the implant or attached components. This could result in fracture of the implant or parts.

What is the cost of implants?

Since implants involve surgery & are more involved, they cost more than traditional bridge work.

