



REPLACEMENT OF MISSING TEETH OPTIONS:

1. IMPLANT SUPPORTED CROWNS:

Benefits:

- No irreversible damage to adjacent teeth, ability to floss in between
- Excellent ability to chew with no movement
- Superior esthetics
- No likelihood of cavities on the implant crowns (vs. Fixed bridgework)
- Allows for a good speech since there are no extra metal parts on palate
- Feels the “most natural” to patients

Consequences:

- Takes the longest period of time to complete since includes waiting period for osseointegration (from surgery to completion is 5-6 months)
- Potential problems with long-term health around an implant crown may include periodontal (gum) disease, porcelain fractures, occlusal (bite) changes, food impaction, decay on adjacent teeth, excessive wear due to grinding and bruxing and temporomandibular joint dysfunction (TMJD)
- There may be progressive loss of bone height around the implant over the lifetime of the implant.
- It is essential to maintain excellent oral hygiene around the implant which will require a commitment. Both regular home cleaning and periodic professional dental hygiene visits are needed. Due to the position of this implant, there may be “natural” triangular gaps near the gum tissue in the front and back of the new crown.
- The patient may need to wear a protective occlusal appliance (bite guard) to help reduce stresses on my implant and the abutment screw. The patient will need to present for checking of occlusion (“bite”) on recommended intervals (usually once / yr) and there is a fee to check and adjust the bite if needed.
- The abutment screw may loosen due to chewing forces. The implant crown may require re-enter and “tightening” of the screw or even “replacement” of the screw. The costs of parts and dentist’s time as part of the maintenance is the patient’s responsibility.
- Smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, chewing hard foods such as ice or hard candy, may result in damage to the implant and cause it to fail completely.
- A medical condition can compromise the longevity of an implant.
- There may be a feeling of awkwardness initially with the new implant crown. There will be a period of adjustment needed for both comfort of tongue, cheek and speech.

Costs:

- Approximate cost for replacing one missing tooth with one implant and crown is \$5000-6000 (not including tooth extraction or bone grafting)



2. FIXED APPLIANCE (BRIDGEWORK) – must have suitable adjacent teeth

Benefits:

- Can achieve a reasonable appearance
- Allows for a good speech since there are no extra metal parts on palate
- Improves chewing function
- Completed in a shorter period of time than an implant retained crown (approx. 1 mo)

Consequences:

- Adjacent teeth will be trimmed down in size in every dimension. This is irreversible.
- Risk of damage to the tooth nerve in the center of the tooth, even after many years, can result in need for root canal treatment
- Oral hygiene demands are high to learn how to floss under the false tooth using special floss threaders for bridgework
- Failure to do so may lead to problems such as periodontal (gum) disease including bone loss and gum recession, porcelain fractures, bite changes, stains, food impaction and dental decay.
- Colour is not exact to match natural teeth due to differences in porcelain and enamel. Colour and shape can only be approximated.
- Bridgework usually should be protected from clenching and grinding forces with a protective bite guard.
- Normal to expect that the bridgework will wear or gaps may open between bridgework and natural teeth requiring replacement. Normal to have bridgework last 5-10 years.

Costs:

- Approximate for a 3-unit fixed bridge replacing one missing tooth is \$3600-4000.



3. REMOVABLE APPLIANCE (“partial denture”)

Benefits:

- Less costly than any fixed “permanent” option for replacing teeth
- Will help stabilize adjacent and opposite teeth from drifting and tipping
- Will help with chewing where teeth are replaced
- Will improve the appearance of missing teeth and sunken facial appearance

Consequences:

- It is removable, so there are esthetic and functional concerns when a patient does not wear
- Should be removed at night to allow gum tissues “to breathe”
- May cause extra wear on the adjacent teeth that are holding the clasps of the denture. Such problem may include periodontal (gum) disease including bone loss and gum recession, porcelain fractures, bite changes, stains, food impaction and dental decay.
- Excellent oral hygiene is required around the adjacent teeth to minimize risk of decay.
- Will have minor movement during eating which may lead to food collection under denture, odor, chipping, wear and retention problems
- As the bone and gums shrink under the denture over time, the denture may start to “settle” and no longer fit well. It may require adjustment, relining or replacement every few years.
- May require patience in “getting used to” having extra pieces on your gums or palate. Will be noticeable to your tongue.
- Coverage of the palate and gums may reduce the sensations of food and taste. This may also affect speech
- Aesthetics are compromised with appearance of metal clasps

Costs:

- Approximate for a Cast partial denture is \$1500.

4. NO REPLACEMENT

Benefits:

- no costs at this time

Consequences:

- Drifting and tipping of adjacent teeth, leading to mobility (movement) of these teeth and may lead to more tooth loss
- Over-eruption of opposite teeth which will lead to food impaction between teeth, cavities and more tooth loss
- Collapse of the bite on the side of missing teeth – leading to difficulty to chew food
- Stress on the TMJ (jaw joints) due to imbalances in chewing which may lead to clicking, popping noises while eating, difficulty opening and TMJ pain
- Conditions may continue to fail that options for replacement may no longer be available or may become more complicated and expensive.