

Implant treatment usually involves three basic steps:

- 1. Placement of the Implant:** Your dentist will carefully locate the position where the implant should be placed, using X-Rays, CT Scan or other diagnostic tools. Then the dentist surgically places the implant into the jawbone. You may have some swelling and/or tenderness after surgery. The concerned dentist may prescribe antibiotics to ease the discomfort. During the healing process, your dentist may tell you to have a soft food diet.
- 2. Healing Process:** What makes an implant so strong is that the jawbone grows around it and holds it in place. This process, called osseointegration (OSSe- o-in-te-GRAY-shun), takes time. It takes 3 months in lower jaw and 6 months for upper jaw before the implant is completely integrated into the bone. Then you can get the permanent replacement tooth or teeth. In many cases, the implant and temporary replacement teeth can be placed in one visit.
- 3. Placement of the Prosthesis (Replacement Tooth or Teeth):** For a single tooth implant, the dentist custom-makes a new tooth for you, called a dental crown. It is designed to look just like your other teeth. Implant-supported bridges and dentures are also custom-made to look like natural teeth and to fit your mouth. The replacement teeth are attached to the implant posts. Replacement teeth usually take some time to make. In the meantime, your dentist may give you a temporary crown, bridge or denture (this will come at an added cost). This will help you eat and speak normally until the permanent replacement teeth are ready.

Other Things to Think About

You should discuss implant treatment carefully with your dentist. Dental implant treatment can take longer and cost more than other replacement options. But dental implants are often a good value because they can last a lifetime considering the below points.

- Regular dental visits are strictly recommended to the long-term success of your implant. Your dentist will set up a program to help you keep your implant and natural teeth healthy
- Your dentist will also suggest a home-care routine that meets your needs. It will include brushing twice a day and flossing once a day. You may also be advised to use a special toothbrush or mouth rinse to help prevent cavities and gum disease

Talk with your dentist about dental implants. He or she can help you decide if implant treatment is right for you.



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WHAT ARE DENTAL IMPLANTS?

Read on to find out.



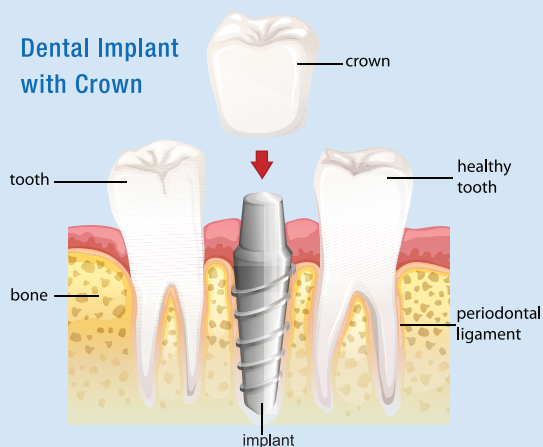
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Dental implants are an effective way to replace missing teeth. When teeth are lost because of disease or an accident, dental implant is the best option.

Implants are metal posts surgically placed into the upper or lower jawbone. They replace the root of one or more missing teeth. Dental implants are made of titanium (a strong, lightweight metal).



Choose dental implants if you:

- Hide your smile because you have missing teeth
- Wear dentures that are uncomfortable
- Are dissatisfied with your removable partial dentures
- Want to keep your other teeth intact

Missing teeth can affect your looks and also your confidence

- Bone loss can occur around the missing tooth. This may cause the remaining teeth to become loose over time
- Loss of teeth and bone can make your face sag, you may start to look older
- A missing tooth can make it harder to chew
- When a tooth is lost and not replaced, the teeth around it can shift

Are you a Good Candidate for Dental Implants?

- If you are in good general health and your jaw can support an implant, this treatment may be a good option for you unless you are younger than 17 years of age. Your health is more important than your age
- However, implants are not an option for everyone. Patients should be in good health or cleared by their physicians before scheduling any implant surgery. They should have enough jawbone to support the implant or be able to have surgery to build up the jawbone. Bone can be built up with a bone graft or with sinus lift surgery
- Chronic illnesses, such as Diabetes, Hypertension and Osteoporosis may slow healing after surgery
- Implant treatment may not be a good option for patients with these illnesses but it is not a total contraindication. Smoking and Tobacco use can also slow down the healing process
- If your dentist does recommend implant treatment, good oral hygiene is essential for the success of the implant. You must spend time caring for the implant and making sure that the area around it is very clean. If not, you might increase your risk for gum disease, which can weaken the bone and tissues needed to support the implant

What are the Benefits of Dental Implants?

- Dental Implants significantly boost your confidence not just in terms of looks but in functionality too
- Implants offer firm support to man-made teeth. Dentures, bridges or single teeth attached to the implants won't slip or shift in your mouth — a very important benefit while eating and speaking

- This secure fit also helps man-made teeth feel more natural than typical bridges or dentures
- Some people may find implant-supported dentures more comfortable than dentures that do not use implants
- Where teeth are missing, dental implants also prevent the jawbone from shrinking
- Implants are a good value, because they can last a lifetime with good care



What Is Involved in Implant Placement?

Many kinds of implants are available. Treatment can take only one day, or it can take several months, or somewhere in between. Your dentist is the best one to suggest the best course of treatment.