

Dental Implants

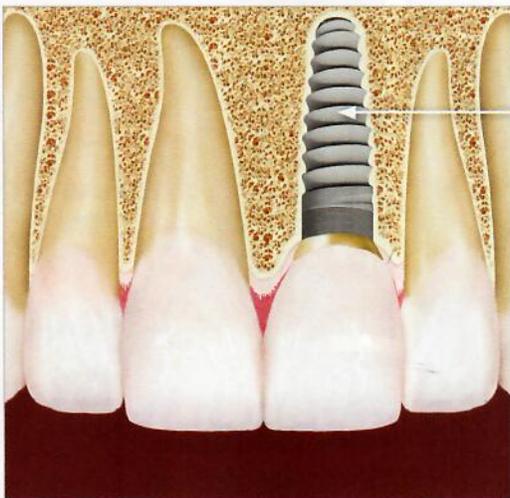
Your Best Option for Replacing Missing Teeth

Dental implants are the gold standard in modern dentistry for tooth-replacement—whether you need one tooth, several teeth, or a full set of new teeth. Why is this option preferred above all others?

For one thing, a decades-long track record has proven dental implants to be the longest-lasting, most natural-looking, and best-functioning substitute for natural teeth. They have a lifetime success rate above 95% — the highest of any tooth replacement option. Dental bridgework, by contrast, will usually need to be replaced within 10 to 20 years.

Dental implants can also help maintain the health of the jawbone. Studies have shown they do this by preventing the bone loss that normally occurs when even one tooth is lost. Wearing removable dentures, on the other hand, actually accelerates bone loss.

Many of the benefits of dental implants stem from the fact that bone cells in the jaw securely attach to them, unlike other options. This means there's no slippage or other movement (which can occur with removable dentures), no problems with eating the foods you really like, and less likelihood of needing periodic repair or replacement (as bridges and removable dentures usually require). Let's look a little closer at the tiny devices that make these big advantages possible.



What Is a Dental Implant?

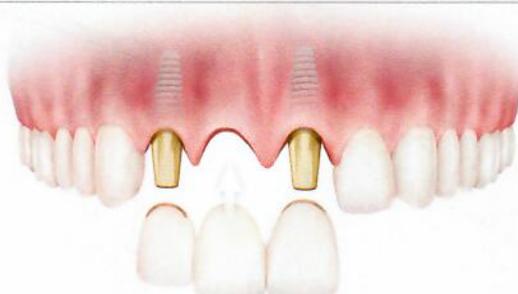
A dental implant is a small titanium post placed in the bone beneath the gums, where it can serve as a replacement tooth root. Titanium is osteophilic (bone-loving), which means bone cells will attach to and integrate with it. The implant body often includes ridges or threads that also help it anchor to the bone. Implants provide an immovable support for the natural-looking replacement teeth attached to them.

Dental Implant Treatment Options



Replacing a Single Tooth

A single implant is ideal for replacing individual missing teeth. An implant-supported replacement tooth looks and feels natural and is healthier for adjacent teeth than either a partial denture or a fixed bridge.



Replacing Multiple Teeth

When 3 teeth in a row are missing, 2 implants can be used to create a bridge that esthetically and functionally replaces the missing teeth without damaging adjacent natural teeth.

Khartoon

When media executive Khartoon learned that her fractured front tooth could not be saved, she worried about how it would affect her career. “The industry I work in is very much relationally driven face-to-face. It’s devastating to think you’re not going to look like yourself because of something you couldn’t control.” Fortunately, an implant-supported replacement tooth was the perfect solution. “The procedure went so well, and my new tooth looks fantastic!” She would recommend the procedure to others “one million percent.”

“My new tooth looks fantastic!”





Replacing All Teeth

A fixed denture (one that doesn't need to come out of the mouth) can be supported by 4-6 implants to replace up to 12 teeth, re-establishing proper esthetics and function in an amazingly lifelike way.



Supporting Removable Dentures

Dental implants can be used to create a supporting bar for a removable over-denture. This option provides the same esthetics as a fixed denture, but it comes at a significant cost savings.

Chris

Chris, a 63-year-old business owner and former heavy smoker, lost his teeth due to advanced gum disease. "I tried to wear dentures," he said, "but it was depressing." However, since replacing all his upper teeth and several bottom teeth with dental implants, he now has a beautiful smile and can eat anything. When he first saw his new teeth in the mirror, "It brought tears to my eyes. I couldn't ask for a better smile." He joked, "I might get a book deal or even a movie!"

"I couldn't ask for a better smile."



The Dangers of Removable Dentures

Removable dentures are a tooth-replacement system that has certainly been around for a long time. Your great-grandparents may well have worn removable dentures.

The image of false teeth in a glass on the bedside table is a cliché of denture wearing. So are the assortment of cleaners and adhesives used with them, and the often-heard complaints that dentures just don't feel right. Slippage or unpleasant odors may cause embarrassment; the loss of self-confidence that can result from denture wearing, though hard to measure, is a real concern as well. Yet there are other problems that could be of even greater concern — problems that could eventually cause a decline in one's overall health.

It's well known that people who wear dentures often have trouble eating "challenging" foods, like raw fruits and vegetables — which, as fate would have it, are just the foods that are thought to provide the greatest nutritional benefits. According to a recent survey, 50% of denture wearers avoid many foods due to these types of difficulties. However, the nutritional problems of numerous denture wearers seem to go even deeper: 29% said they can eat only soft foods (which are often highly processed, with little nutritional value). Another 17% stated that they actually eat better *without* their dentures.

When teeth are lost, the bone that used to support them begins to melt away. That's because bone tissue requires constant stimulation from the tooth's roots to keep rebuilding itself. When that stimulation is absent, bone in the jaw loses volume consistently over time — but this loss occurs in an area of the body that's out of sight, below the gum tissue. The decrease in bone volume not only tends to make you look prematurely aged by compressing the facial features, it may cause TMJ (temporomandibular joint) problems as well.

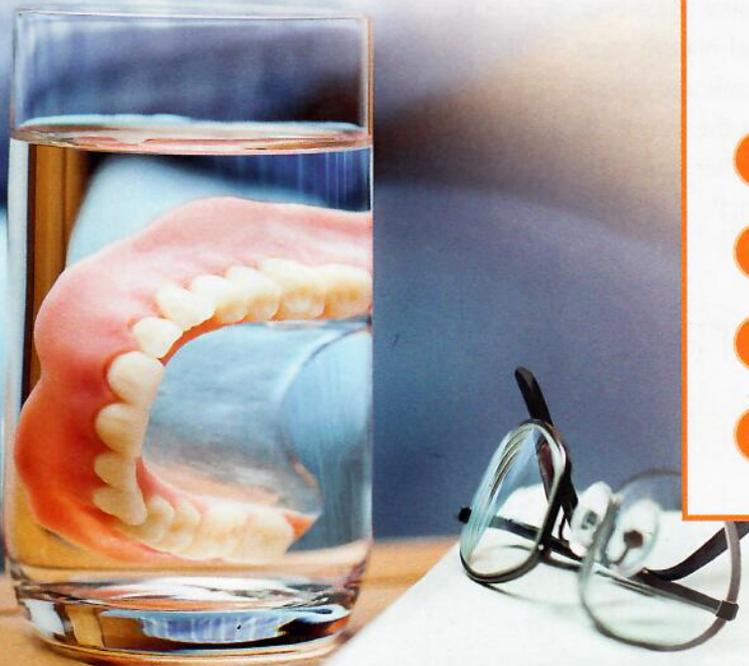
Worse still, wearing removable dentures actually accelerates the process of bone loss. That's because the denture puts pressure on the surface of the bone, rather than distributing it through the entire anatomical structure the way dental implants do. The bone can't handle this type of pressure on its surface, and begins to resorb (melt away) at an increased rate.

If you're wearing dentures or need an answer to the dilemma of missing teeth, ask your dentist whether dental implants may be right for you.

Dangers of Dentures

Progressive Bone Loss in Jaw, Leading to:

- 1 Diminished denture stability over time
- 2 Reduced ability to place dental implants successfully
- 3 Prematurely aged appearance
- 4 Compromised nutrition and chewing ability



The Special Benefits of Dental Implants

No matter how many teeth you need to replace, there are numerous scientific studies demonstrating the ways dental implants surpass other tooth-replacement methods. In general, these fall into two categories: what dental implants do, and what they don't do.

Unlike natural-tooth-supported bridgework, dental implants don't require adjacent healthy teeth to be filed down. Implants don't lead to an increased risk of gum disease, tooth decay, or a root canal problem but research shows these can be issues with bridges supported by filed-down natural teeth. Plus, while studies have shown that those bridges may have a failure rate as high as 10% in just 3 years (and up to 30% in 10 years),* dental implants have been shown in studies to have a long-term success rate of over 95%.

Unlike removable dentures, implants won't shift or feel uncomfortable. They don't develop odors or need special cleaners and adhesives. They don't restrict what foods you can eat or make you feel uncomfortable about chewing, speaking, or smiling. And you'll never have to worry about them slipping or falling out.

One of the biggest benefits of dental implants is that they can help reduce bone loss in the jaw. The natural erosion of bone begins as soon as a tooth is lost — and, if more tooth loss occurs, it may result in the loss of other teeth and lead to a sunken, prematurely aged look in one's facial features. Because dental implants integrate into bone, they provide a stimulus that keeps the jawbone from deteriorating. This helps to maintain a more youthful facial structure — and better oral health.

Another benefit of implants is the lasting value they offer. While there are other options for tooth replacement that may cost less initially, an investment in dental implants provides benefits that truly endure. With proper care, they can last for the rest of your life — and how many other investments can offer that promise? But perhaps the main benefit of dental implants is how they make you feel: like a younger, healthier you.

* Tan, K et al, A Systematic review of the survival and complication rates of fixed partial dentures after an observation period of at least 5 years, Oral Implants Research, 2004:Vol 15, Iss 6, pages 654-666

THE GOLD STANDARD OF TOOTH REPLACEMENT

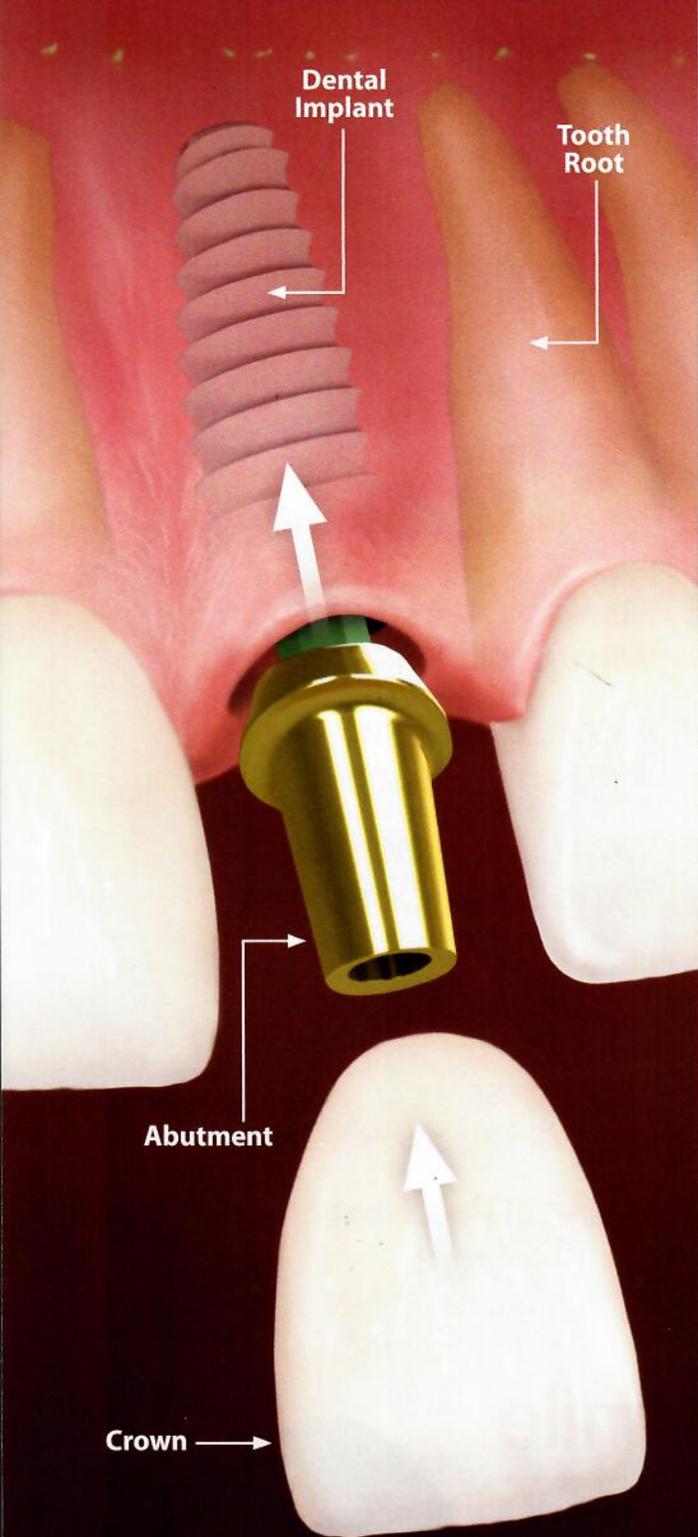
Dental Implants DO:

- Feel very natural
- Minimize bone loss and appearance of aging
- Have the highest success rate for tooth replacement (over 95%)
- Last a lifetime*
- Resist gum disease
- Restore proper chewing ability

Dental Implants DON'T:

- Slip or move
- Decay
- Need root canal treatment
- Restrict your diet
- Impair your speech
- Typically need replacement

* The first patient that received a dental implant in 1965, died 40 years later with the implant still in place. Close to the Edge - Brånemark and the Development of Osseointegration, edited by Elaine McClarence, Quintessence 2003.



Dental implants have been called the most significant dental innovation of our generation, for good reason.

Dental Implants Are Ideal for Replacing Teeth

If you are suffering with missing teeth, failing teeth or chronic dental problems, dental implants can give you the comfort, security, fit, feel and function of natural teeth.

Dental implants typically have three parts:

- 1 The Implant:** A screw that serves as the root for your new tooth. It is inserted into the jawbone and is usually made of high-quality metal such as medical-grade titanium.
- 2 The Abutment:** A component that attaches to the implant and extends through the soft tissue to support the replacement tooth.
- 3 The Crown:** The part of the replacement tooth you can see. It's usually made of porcelain or zirconium for durability and a natural-looking appearance.

Dental implants have been called the most significant dental innovation of our generation, for good reason. Bone actually attaches to the medical-grade titanium resulting in a replacement tooth that feels secure and completely natural. Moreover, implants can help preserve your jawbone, which can become vulnerable to shrinkage over time once teeth are lost.

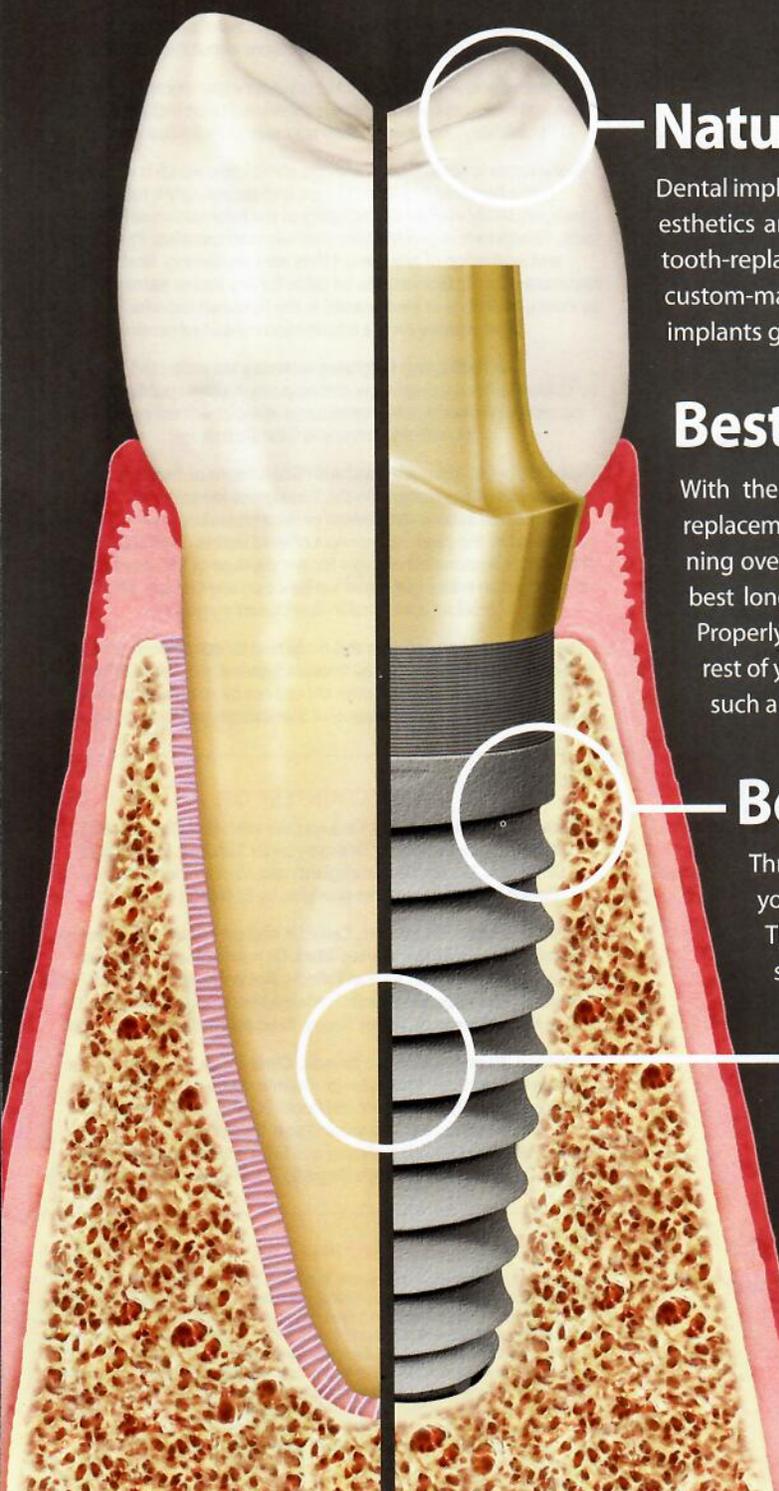
Not only will you look younger with natural-looking, implant-supported teeth, you will regain your ability to eat your favorite foods — even if those foods are apples, steak and corn on the cob!

What is TeethXpress?

TeethXpress is an exciting, state-of-the-art way to get new teeth as fast as possible with dental implants. It relies upon advanced technology unique to implants made by BioHorizons. You can read more about these special design features on page 42.

DENTAL IMPLANTS 101

The Most Significant Dental Innovation of Our Generation



Natural-Looking Appearance

Dental implants are difficult to distinguish from your natural teeth, in both esthetics and function. Plus, they provide a host of benefits that other tooth-replacement systems just can't match. The visible part (crown) is custom-made to enhance your smile — but the real beauty of dental implants goes much deeper.

Best Long-Term Solution

With the highest success rate of any tooth-replacement option and a track record spanning over 50 years, dental implants are the best long-term solution to missing teeth. Properly cared for, implants can last the rest of your life — that's what makes them such a good value.

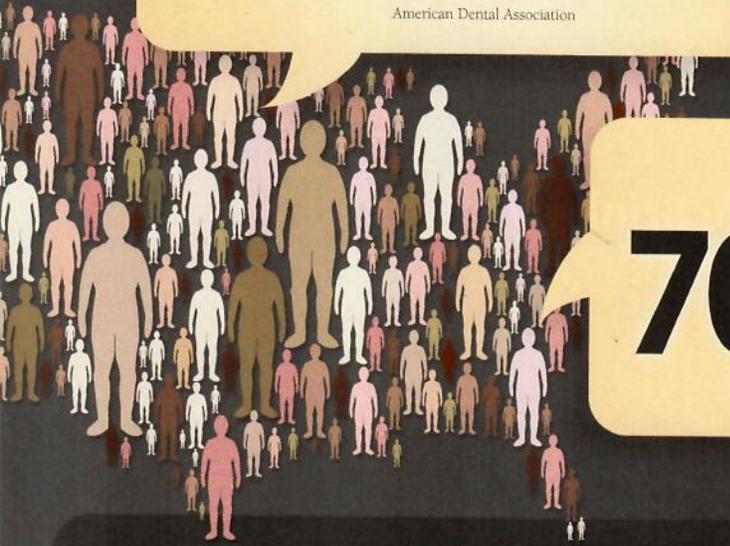


Bone Attaches to Titanium

Through the natural process of osseointegration, bone cells in your jaw actually attach to the titanium metal of the implant. This remarkable union between nature and technology forms a strong and durable anchor for your new teeth.

Dental Implants Replace Tooth Roots

Because they become integrated into the bone itself, dental implants can actually slow or even stop the bone loss that inevitably follows tooth loss. Preserving bone structure helps preserve your appearance — and your confidence.



More than
5,000,000
dental implants are placed
each year in the United States

American Dental Association

You are not alone...

70% of the United States
population is missing
at least one tooth

Bloom B, Gift HC, Jack SS: National Center for Health Statistics.

Dental Implant FAQs

How many teeth can be replaced with dental implants?

You can replace a single tooth, multiple teeth or all of your teeth. However, you don't need one dental implant for every missing tooth. Very often, as few as four to six implants can provide support for a full replacement set of upper or lower teeth.

Is dental implant surgery painful?

Most people find dental implant procedures very easy to tolerate. Any post-operative discomfort can usually be managed with over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen.

Are dental implants expensive?

Initially, implants may seem more expensive than other tooth-replacement methods such as dentures or bridgework. However, since implants are the closest thing to real teeth and last longer than other options, they are often the most cost-effective option.

Am I a candidate for dental implants?

There's a good chance you are a candidate for dental implants, but only your dentist can help you decide after a complete oral examination that includes x-rays of your jaws. Schedule a consultation today to begin the exciting process of restoring your smile with dental implants.

Health Hazards of Tooth Loss

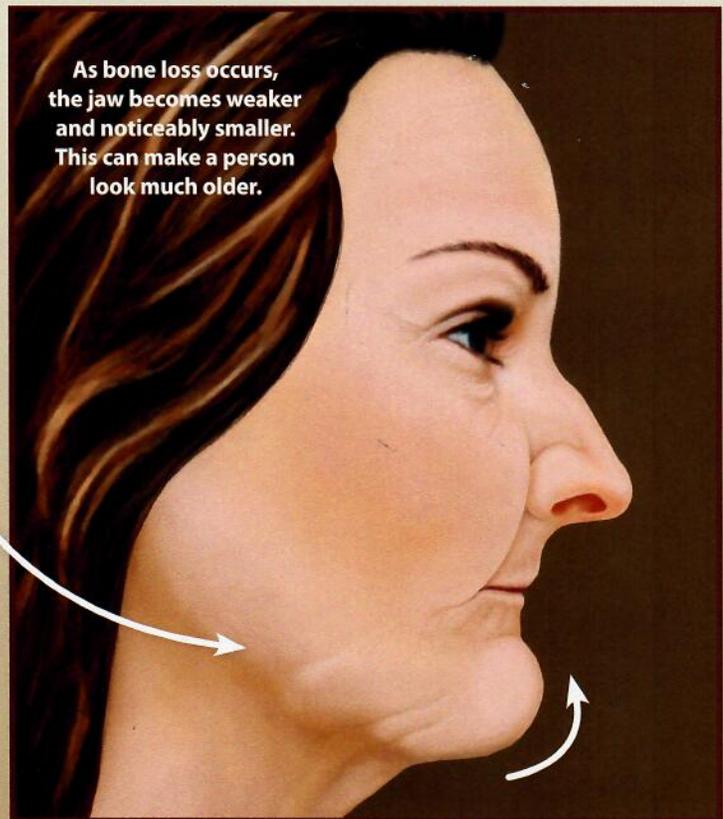
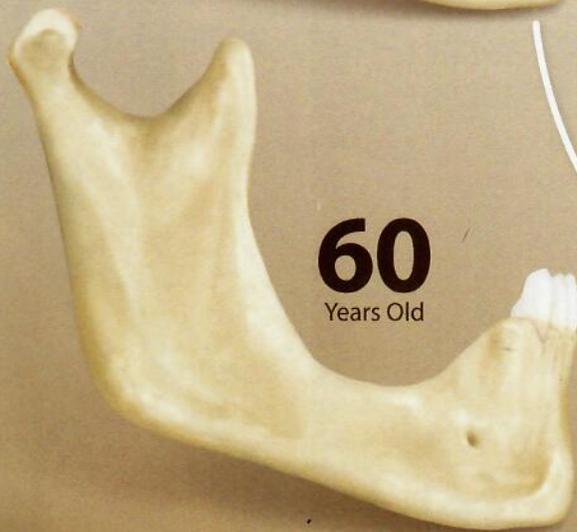
*I*f any of your teeth are missing, you don't have to be told that the consequences can be profound, both physically and emotionally. Favorite foods become difficult to enjoy (or even to eat at all), and social interactions become more challenging. Yet there are some effects of tooth loss that are not immediately obvious — even to those experiencing them. It's important to be aware of these hidden consequences, however, because they can adversely affect your health in ways that become harder to remedy over time. Plus, knowing what happens to your mouth after teeth are lost can help you decide on the best way to replace them.

The longer a tooth is missing, the greater the amount of bone loss

Use It or Lose It: Tooth Loss Causes Bone Loss

Bone needs stimulation to maintain its volume and density. In the case of the bone that surrounds and supports your teeth, that stimulation comes from the teeth touching each other in chewing, speech and normal activity, hundreds of times throughout the day. These stresses prompt the bone underneath each tooth to rebuild continually, maintaining bone density. When a tooth is lost, the stimulation it once provided ceases. This causes the supporting bone in the jaw to shrink — a process called resorption. The longer the tooth is missing, the greater the amount of bone loss. Wearing removable dentures can accelerate this process because of the way they press on the jawbone.

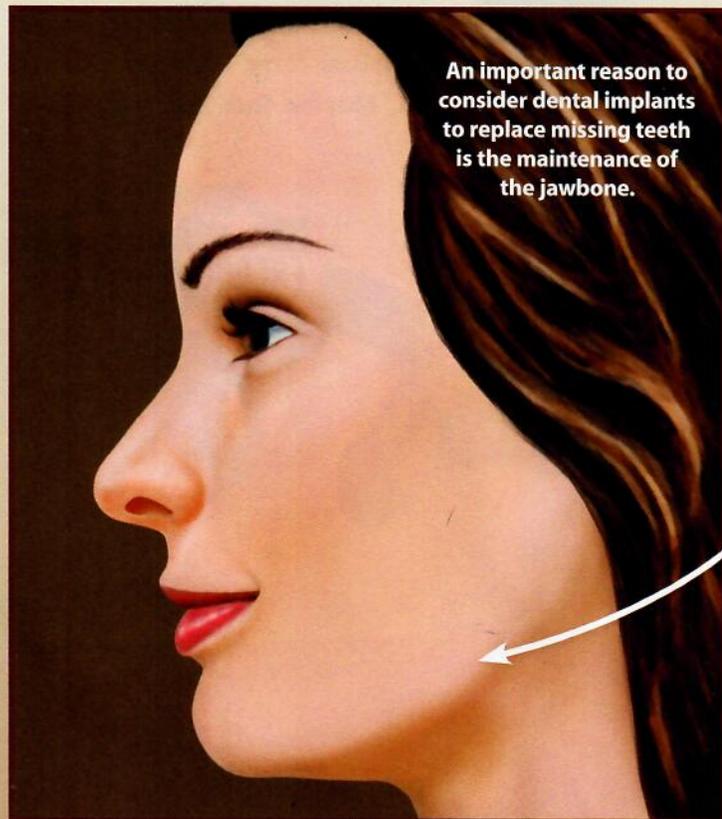
Studies have shown that during the first year after tooth loss there is a 25% decrease in the width of bone, and, over the next few years, an overall 4-millimeter decrease in height. Extreme loss of bone can make an individual more prone to jaw fractures and makes a person look much older. As if all of this wasn't enough to worry about, there's the risk of malnutrition. As teeth are lost, it becomes more difficult to eat and chew food effectively. Unfortunately, the healthier foods — raw fruits and vegetables — usually become the most difficult to chew for toothless people.



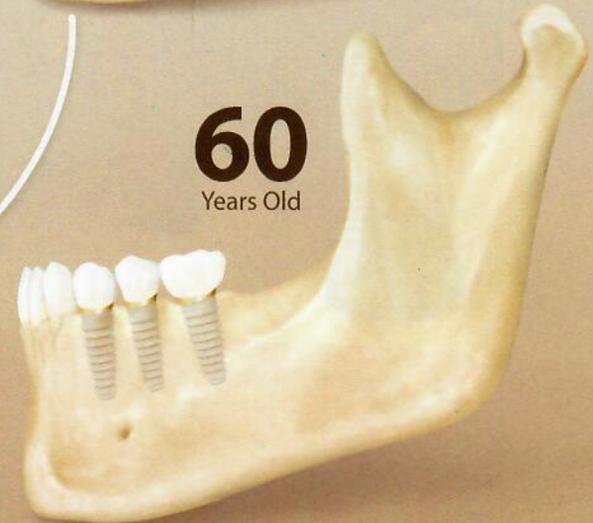
Maintaining Healthy Bone with Dental Implants

None of these problems need occur when missing teeth are replaced with natural-looking prosthetic teeth supported by dental implants. And that's one of the most remarkable things about dental implants: Besides helping a person without teeth look and feel great again, they can actually help prevent bone loss. No other tooth-replacement option offers this important health benefit.

A primary reason to consider dental implants to replace missing teeth, then, is the maintenance of the jawbone. As described earlier, your jawbone needs stimulation to stay healthy. Because dental implants are made of titanium, bone will attach to them, stabilize them and be stimulated by the implants to maintain its dimension and density. Replacement teeth supported by dental implants do not put pressure on the gums and the surfaces of the bony ridges of your mouth the way that removable dentures do. They also don't compromise adjacent healthy teeth, as standard dental bridges do. In fact, as time goes by, and you continue to enjoy life with great-looking, functional teeth, you'll hardly think about the fact that you have dental implants. Best of all, with proper care, implants should never need to be replaced — meaning that your investment will still be paying dividends far into the future.



Dental implants maintain bone volume and density levels over many years



What to Expect When You're Getting Dental Implants

*M*aking the choice to replace your missing or failing teeth with dental implants is a big step... but in terms of bringing back your healthy smile, it just might be the only challenging one you'll need to make. Once you've decided to go with dental implants, your team of dental professionals will take care of the rest. It's a smooth progression from initial consultation and pre-operative planning through the implant procedure itself, concluding with your follow-up care. When it's done, you will have the natural-looking smile you've dreamed about. Want to know how this all happens? Read on!



1

Pre-Procedure

The first step in your treatment is an initial examination and a discussion with your implant dentist about your expectations and concerns. By the time your first meeting is over, several details should be clearer. For example: How many of your teeth are missing, how many are in good condition, and how many are questionable? Would you be best off with a full set of upper or lower replacement teeth — or is it only one or two teeth that need replacement? Do you have any medical conditions that would complicate or preclude implant placement? What can you expect from this treatment — and approximately how much should it cost? Not all of these questions can be answered immediately — but they can be soon.

2

Treatment Plan

Just as your builder wouldn't start constructing your new house without a drawing, your dentist won't place your implants without a treatment plan. Diagnostic images of your mouth can reveal the condition of existing teeth and bone, and show the position of various anatomical structures in the jaw. This helps in terms of planning the number and type of implants to be used, and the locations where they should be placed. Before any procedures are performed, you and your dentist will discuss what type of anesthesia or sedation will work best for you. If you have any other questions or concerns about the procedure, this is the perfect time to raise them. Next, it's on to the big day.

3

Day of Procedure

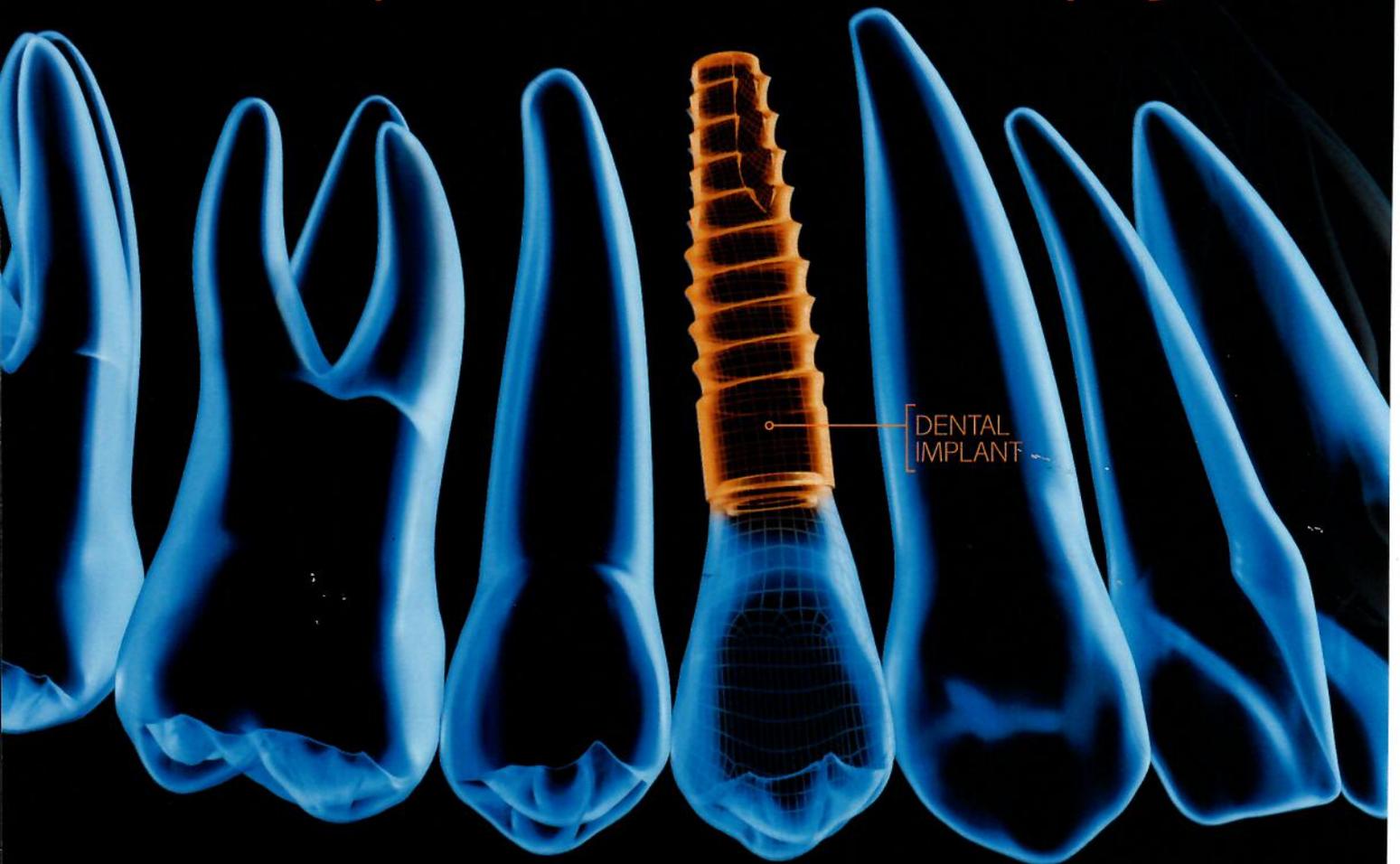
When you arrive for your procedure, you will be made comfortable with the appropriate anesthesia. If any of your teeth need to be extracted, that will be done first. Then the dental implants will be placed in your jaw. This may require small incisions to be made in the gums, providing access to the bone underneath. Next, tiny holes called osteotomies will be prepared at precise locations in your jawbone. You won't feel any pain because you will be fully anesthetized, but you may experience mild vibrations. Your implants will then be carefully placed in the osteotomy sites and adjusted for a perfect fit. Any incisions will be closed, typically with self-dissolving sutures (stitches). A set of temporary replacement teeth may be attached to the implants so you won't have to leave the office without teeth.

4

Post-Operative Care

When the procedure is over, the healing process begins. For the first couple of days, you will want to go easy on your new implants by eating soft foods. Over-the-counter pain medication, like ibuprofen, is usually all that's needed to control any soreness you may feel. You can return to normal activities within a day or two, but your dentist may recommend a softer diet for a few weeks. As your implants slowly become integrated into your jawbone, your dentist will carefully monitor your progress. After a period of two to three months, your gums will have fully healed and your implants will be firmly anchored in the jaw. At that point, your final teeth will be attached to your implants. With the same routine care you would give natural teeth, they can be expected to last the rest of your life.

How Technology Aids Dental Implant Therapy



Dental Implants are today's preferred solution to the problem of missing teeth. These state-of-the-art devices boast an impressive track record: They have been routinely used in North America for over four decades, and have a success rate above 95 percent. But far from being satisfied, dental manufacturers and researchers are constantly making new advances to implant systems — improving the implants themselves and the technology that supports them. Here's a look at some of the latest innovations in this cutting-edge field.

CT/CBCT Scanning

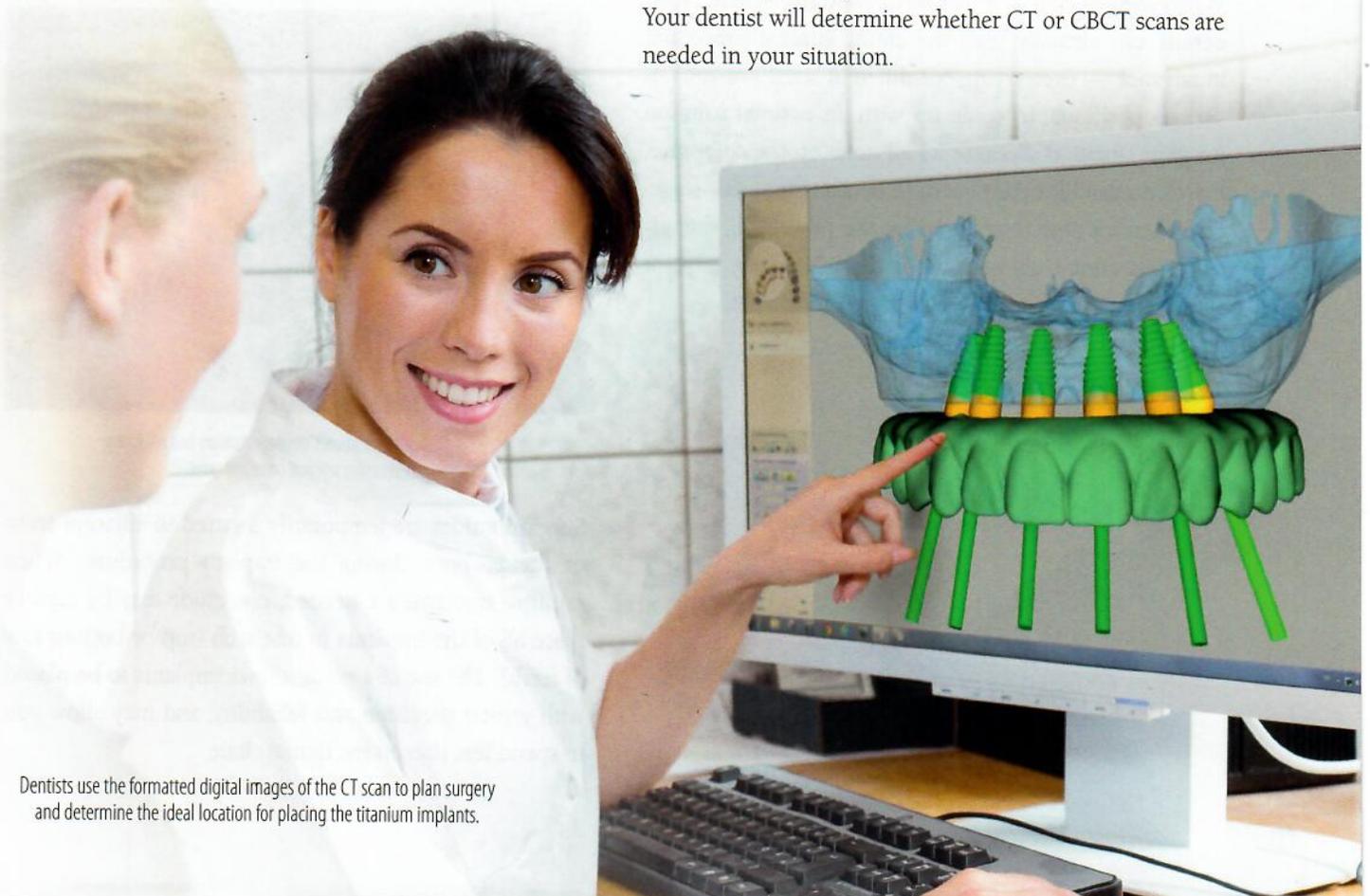
Besides teeth and gums, the jaws and face also contain nerves, sinuses and other structures. Dentists who perform the minor procedure to place implants in the jaw often need to know the exact location of anatomical structures that lie hidden beneath the gums. That's where high-tech diagnostic imaging such as CT scanners and CBCT scanners can help. A CT (computed tomography) scanner takes a series of digital x-rays and combines them into a single 3-D image. Cone beam CT scanners (CBCTs) use a newer cone beam technology that can produce the complete 3-D image faster using a much smaller piece of equipment. These high-tech machines have become valuable diagnostic tools for the implant procedure.

By using a CT or CBCT scanner, a dentist can see exactly where nerves exist, where sinus cavities come close to the jawbone, and even the amount and quality of the bone itself. What's more, the scans can help pinpoint the best possible location for the titanium implants, based on each individual's particular anatomy.



Cone beam CT scanners use a spiral beam of digital x-rays to produce a high-resolution image that allows dentists to identify the location of nerves, sinus cavities, and the quality and quantity of bone tissue.

A CT/CBCT scan isn't always required to get a dental implant; however, it's a great diagnostic tool and is often needed when a lack of sufficient bone, many missing teeth, or other issues raise questions about the optimal placement of implants. Because CT/CBCT scans involve exposure to a modest amount of radiation, this small risk must be weighed against the procedure's known benefits. Your dentist will determine whether CT or CBCT scans are needed in your situation.



Dentists use the formatted digital images of the CT scan to plan surgery and determine the ideal location for placing the titanium implants.

Digital Imaging & Virtual Treatment Planning

In conjunction with the images obtained from scans, powerful computers and specialized software are increasingly finding applications in different phases of implant treatment. Digital image processing software is capable of producing a 3-D model of an individual's mouth, which can be rotated, enlarged, and viewed from any angle. These detailed digital models show not only the teeth, jaws and other structures that exist now — they can also show what your smile will look like after treatment.



When used as part of a treatment planning system, your dentist can virtually plan the entire implant procedure in advance — even trying out different sized implants in various positions, to come up with an optimal solution for your situation. Because it's all done on the computer, there's no need for the patient to be present at this stage. But when it's time to come in for the procedure, the advance planning truly pays off: It can make your implant surgery faster, less invasive and more predictable.



A surgical guide facilitates proper placement of implants.

Custom-Made Surgical Guides

A surgical guide is a custom-made device that is manufactured to fit your anatomy — the particular contours of your gums — and the specific implants you will receive. It is designed to help dentists put dental implants in exactly the right location in your jaw. Using a surgical guide, your dentist can be sure that an implant will be placed at a precise position, angle, and depth. Proper positioning helps your new teeth function optimally and securely for years to come.

Surgical guides are individually produced using 3-D printing or other advanced manufacturing methods, using the digital information that was obtained from scans of your mouth. Their pinpoint accuracy comes from the precision of the digital scan. Guides are designed to be used with a special set of guided dental instruments, and allow the instruments to move in specific, controlled ways. For example, when your treatment plan calls for a certain size of implant to be inserted with a particular orientation, the guide helps your dentist locate the exact spot and ensures that the implant is placed with the precise angle and depth.



The surgical guide promotes greater precision and reliability, decreasing surgical time and error.

Surgical guides are temporarily secured to adjacent teeth or the jawbone during the implant procedure. When multiple implants are needed, one guide may be used to place all of the implants in one arch (top or bottom row of teeth). The use of a guide allows implants to be placed with greater precision and reliability, and may allow you to spend less time in the dental chair.

Digital Impressions

If you are missing only some teeth, your dentist will want to be sure that the crowns (visible parts) of your new implant teeth will match properly with your existing teeth. Whether you are replacing some or all teeth, you will probably want to see that your new smile will appear natural and esthetically pleasing. This can be accomplished by making a model of your teeth as they appear both before and after treatment. In the past, dentists made models by taking impressions with a putty-like substance placed in a tray inside your mouth. Today, it's possible to make those same models using digital impressions.

With digital impressions, a wand-like device is used to scan the exact shape and position of your teeth, and gums. The process is similar to a CT scan — except that light rays are used instead of x-rays, and only the surface contours are recorded. Image-processing software takes the readings and constructs a virtual 3-D surface model of your gums and teeth, which can be used to make a physical model. Having a precise model of your mouth can help your dentist design implant crowns that will fit perfectly in your smile. It can also show you exactly what the end result of your treatment will be.

Putting It All Together

Current computer and software systems make it possible to integrate many of these technologies to leverage their benefits. For example, when the data sets from digital impressions and CT/CBCT scans are combined, the result is a more complete virtual model of the mouth, showing both visible features and structures that lie beneath the gums. This can in turn be used to produce even more accurate treatment plans and surgical guides. Information from this model can also be used by computer-controlled milling machines to produce implant crowns that are custom-made just for you, reducing the number of try-in appointments and ensuring accuracy and esthetics.

The convergence of several advanced technologies places implant dentistry on the cutting edge of medical treatment. Using advanced diagnostic imaging, computer-aided manufacturing, guided surgery and virtual treatment planning, dentists are providing implants with greater precision, accuracy and efficiency; and many patients are enjoying the benefits of dental implants with more conservative treatment and less time in the chair.

A digital scanner creates a virtual dental model; that information goes to a computer-controlled milling machine to fabricate a custom-made crown.



5



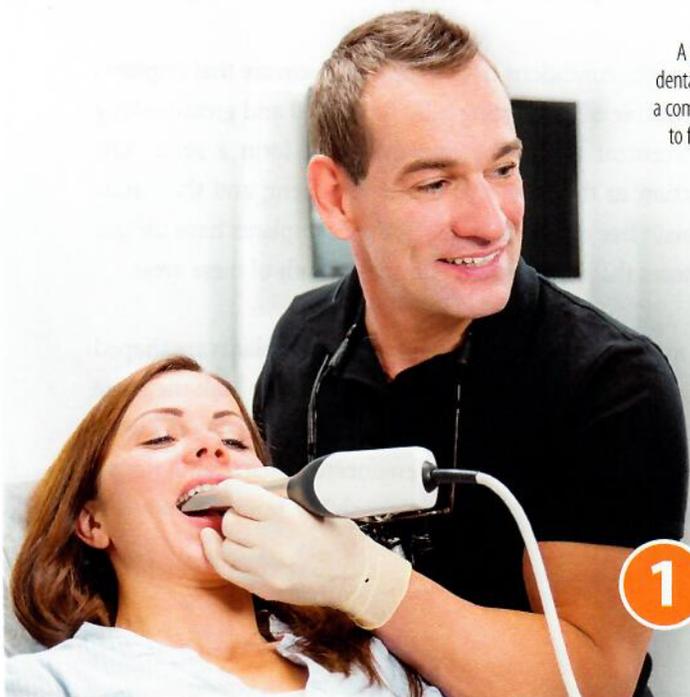
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Making Treatment Affordable

Dental implants are today's best option for replacing lost or failing teeth. Of course, like anything that involves state-of-the-art technology and the services of skilled professionals, implant treatment is not cheap, but rather a long-term investment. And since no two patients are exactly alike, the cost of dental implant therapy may vary accordingly. Getting dental implants, like many life-enhancing procedures, is often considered elective, and therefore dental insurance may satisfy only a portion of the procedure. This can be the case even though the procedure offers proven health benefits. So, if you need and want dental implant treatment, what are some ways you can pay for it?

There is always the old fashioned way: you can tap into any savings you may have. In fact, some dentists will offer a discount if a patient is able to pay in advance. However, if you require additional time to save up for the procedure, it may mean a delay in gaining the use and benefits of treatment. That's why many people find that financing (in essence borrowing) or using credit is the best way to pay for the care they need. There are various ways to go about doing this.

Healthcare Borrowing Options

The following options offer several advantages. It is always important to have any treatment financing questions answered before you proceed with treatment.



General-Use Credit Cards

There's a good chance your dentist will accept payment by a credit card you already have. If you use it, you won't have to apply for a new loan. The downside is that you might tie up credit you routinely rely on for other needs; plus, credit card interest rates can be higher than other types of loans. Here's a good tip from one consumer advocate: If you want to charge dental expenses to your credit card, look for a good deal on transferring that balance to a new card. Some credit card companies offer a single-digit interest rate for the life of the transferred balance, but charge a transfer fee; make sure to read the fine print.



Healthcare Credit Cards

In recent years, credit cards designed specifically for healthcare expenses have emerged, which allow you to charge as many dental treatment procedures as you want until you reach your credit limit. This form of credit is more frequently used when only one or two dental implants are required. Typically, consumers who are approved for this type of card will pay an interest rate of approximately 14.9%. Late monthly payments, however, can result in penalty interest rates that are significantly higher and late fees of up to \$35. So, it is important to be comfortable with the size of the monthly payment required.



Healthcare Installment Loan

If you have a large dental or medical expense that you want to finance with a payment plan, an installment loan might be your best option. Unlike a healthcare credit card, to which you can charge many smaller procedures (as long as you don't go over your credit limit), an installment loan sets a payment schedule and fixed interest rate for one larger instance of borrowing — having all of your missing or failing teeth replaced with dental implants, for example. In that way, it's very much like taking out a car loan. Interest rates depend on your credit history, with the average consumer paying around a 9.9% APR. There are no early repayment penalties.



Home Equity Loan or Line of Credit

Equity loans are secured by collateral, such as the borrower's house. Because of this, they tend to have lower interest rates than so-called unsecured debt such as credit cards and installment loans. That's the main advantage of an equity loan, which some people seek when remodeling a kitchen, covering a child's college tuition, or seeking quality of life-improving healthcare like the TeethXpress implant procedure. The equity you have in your home determines the amount you can borrow.



Putting off dental implant treatment often necessitates additional procedures that increase total cost:

- Bone Grafting
- Sinus Surgery
- More Implants
- Gum Treatment

Doing Nothing Also Has Costs

As you look into the cost of dental implant treatment and consider your financing options, there's a related question you should ask: What is the financial cost of NOT taking prompt action to restore your smile? As it turns out, the longer a person without teeth waits to get dental implants, the higher the final price tag is likely to be. The main reason for that price increase is the gradual loss of jawbone that always accompanies tooth loss.

Soon after you start to lose teeth, the bone that supported them begins to deteriorate. Dental implants are proven to slow or even stop this destructive process. That's because of the unique way they attach to your jawbone, actually becoming part of it and helping to stabilize it. The longer you delay implant treatment, the more bone is lost. This can complicate your procedure, making it more expensive.

For example, if your bone has shrunk down to the point that the sinus cavity becomes very close to the surface,

it might be too risky to place an implant in the ideal location without first building up the bone volume. This does not preclude treatment with dental implants — in fact, various bone grafting procedures are quite common these days. But if you need this, it's an added cost. Plus, it usually means the implant procedure will have to be done in stages, rather than in one day. Certain situations that involve bone loss could also call for more implants, or for longer implants that extend into the cheek bone. Untreated periodontal disease is another factor that can complicate treatment and add to its cost.

Depending on how long you wait, these problems could significantly increase your costs. Fortunately, you can avoid this by acting promptly to safeguard your health and your smile. Where's the best place to start? Your dentist's office!