

Dental Implants

The Solution For Missing Teeth

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It's happened to many of us. We're eating our favorite food, when wham, we chip or break a tooth. Patients have broken their teeth on every food you can think of from potato chips to pizza. It can also happen from incidental contact, playing sports, or roughhousing. Invariably people are stuck with the same problem, how to replace a broken or chipped tooth permanently. Throughout the years patients have been struggling to find a replacement for missing teeth.

Dentures have offered a replacement for many decades. However, patients have many complaints against them. An underlying thought is that dentures are for the elderly, not for middle-aged or adolescents. The most common complaint is that dentures are not stable, are hard to chew with, and in most cases the dentures look fake.

Another alternative is to use a bridge. Bridges are more stable than dentures, and tend to provide a solution for a few years. However, bridges undermined the adjacent teeth, and throughout the years patients end up losing these teeth as well. Nowadays, the solution available is called dental implants.

Dental implants are metal posts or frames that are surgically placed into your jawbone beneath your gum tissues. The post acts as a root to hold the replacement tooth in place. Dental implants feel so much like your natural teeth that it will be difficult to tell that

you have a replacement tooth.

Since the implant integrates into the structure of your bone, it can prevent the bone loss that often accompanies missing teeth. Implants help keep the bone healthy and intact. The stresses on the implant actually strengthen the surrounding bone.

There are many other benefits to dental implants. Dental implants do not sacrifice the quality of the other teeth like a bridge and a partial denture do. Placing an implant does not require alteration to other teeth for support. The neighboring teeth are left virgin, in other words, there is no need to cut healthy tooth structure away. Furthermore, implants do not interfere with the other teeth. This makes it much easier to keep them clean. Over the years, dentures and bridges undermine other teeth.

First they place extra stress on them, creating more bone loss that supports them. Second, with dentures and bridges, cleaning teeth becomes more difficult. This leaves the teeth more open to decay and gum diseases. Third, the teeth are left virgin, much stronger and more resistant to decay and gum diseases. The best part to replacing a denture with implants is that you can finally say good-bye to those messy denture paste and glues!

Implants will allow you to speak clearly again. They will not interfere with the tongue or the gum tissue. Eating will be more comfortable, as implants are more stable, and stronger to chew with. Patients will also feel more confident with implants. They are securely placed into the

bone, which eliminates the fear of them falling out like dentures.

In addition, implants end up costing less than other replacement options. Initially, dentures might sound like the cheapest. However, dentures and bridges need to be replaced at much higher intervals. Implant success is very high, and they will last for a long time, making it a better investment over a long-term period. Keep in mind that in many cases, implants and bridges could cost the same.

Depending on your specific condition and the type of implant chosen, your dentist will create a treatment plan especially for your dental needs and desires. The total treatment time depends on the complexity of your treatment needs. It is of high importance that you see yourself and your dentist as a team working together to reach your treatment goals. For many people their teeth go unchecked and unattended. Some people believe that no matter what they subject their teeth to, they will have strong beautiful smiles their whole life. The truth is that regular check-ups, flossing, brushing, and the use of a fluoride rinses are the only possible way to keep the great smile you have.

If you have a broken or chipped tooth and are in need of dental work, don't wait! Not attending to teeth that have been damaged can lead to long-term negative effects. Having to repair these negative effects could be costly as well as time consuming. See a dentist now to discuss treatment options that are best for you.

Check the next issue for details on the procedure of placing a dental implant.