**Dental Implants**

**What are dental Implants**

A dental implant is a long-term solution for replacing missing teeth. Your dentist places them directly into your jawbone, where they provide an artificial replacement for the root of your missing tooth or teeth. They can support crowns or dentures, in a similar way that roots support natural teeth.

**Dental Implants**

* Improved appearance.
* Improved speech. With poor-fitting dentures, the **teeth** can slip within your mouth, causing you to mumble or slur your words. ...
* Improved comfort.
* Easier eating. **Dental implants** allow you to eat your favorite foods.
* Improved self-esteem.
* Improved oral health.
* Durability.
* Convenience.

**What is the procedure in having dental implants**

Because dental implants require one or more surgical procedures, you must have a thorough evaluation to prepare for the process, including a:

* **Comprehensive dental exam.** You may have dental X-rays and 3D images taken, and have models made of your teeth and jaw.
* **Review of your medical history.** Tell your doctor about any medical conditions and any medications you take, including prescription and over-the-counter drugs and supplements. If you have certain heart conditions or orthopedic implants, your doctor may prescribe antibiotics before surgery to help prevent infection.
* **Treatment plan.** Tailored to your situation, this plan takes into account factors such as how many teeth you need replaced and the condition of your jawbone and remaining teeth.

To control pain, anesthesia options during surgery include local anesthesia, sedation or general anesthesia. Talk to your dental specialist about which option is best for you. Your dentist will instruct you about eating and drinking before surgery, depending on what type of anesthesia you have. If you're having sedation or general anesthesia, plan to have someone take you home after surgery and expect to rest for the remainder of the day.

During surgery to place the dental implant, your oral surgeon makes a cut to open your gum and expose the bone. Holes are drilled into the bone where the dental implant metal post will be placed. Since the post will serve as the tooth root, it's implanted deep into the bone.

At this point, you'll still have a gap where your tooth is missing. A type of partial, temporary denture can be placed for appearance, if needed. You can remove this denture for cleaning and while you sleep.

**Waiting for bone growth**

Once the metal implant post is placed in your jawbone, osseointegration (oss-ee-oh-in-tuh-GRAY-shun) begins. During this process, the jawbone grows into and unites with the surface of the dental implant. This process, which can take several months, helps provide a solid base for your new artificial tooth — just as roots do for your natural teeth.

**Placing the abutment**

When osseointegration is complete, you may need additional surgery to place the abutment — the piece where the crown will eventually attach. This minor surgery is typically done with local anesthesia in an outpatient setting.

To place the abutment:

* Your oral surgeon reopens your gum to expose the dental implant
* The abutment is attached to the dental implant
* The gum tissue is then closed around, but not over, the abutment

In some cases, the abutment is attached to the dental implant metal post when the post is implanted. That means you won't need an extra surgical step. Because the abutment juts past the gumline, however, it's visible when you open your mouth — and it will be that way until your dentist completes the tooth prosthesis. Some people don't like that appearance and prefer to have the abutment placed in a separate procedure.

After the abutment is placed, your gums must heal for about two weeks before the artificial tooth can be attached.

**Choosing your new artificial teeth**

Once your gums heal, you'll have more impressions made of your mouth and remaining teeth. These impressions are used to make the crown — your realistic-looking artificial tooth. The crown can't be placed until your jawbone is strong enough to support use of the new tooth.

You and your dental specialist can choose artificial teeth that are removable, fixed or a combination of both:

* **Removable.** This type is similar to a conventional removable denture and can be a partial or full denture. It contains artificial white teeth surrounded by pink plastic gum. It's mounted on a metal frame that's attached to the implant abutment, and it snaps securely into place. It can be easily removed for repair or daily cleaning.
* **Fixed.** In this type, an artificial tooth is permanently screwed or cemented onto an individual implant abutment. You can't remove the tooth for cleaning or during sleep. Most of the time, each crown is attached to its own dental implant. However, because implants are exceptionally strong, several teeth can be replaced by one implant if they're bridged together.

**After the procedure**

Whether you have dental implant surgery in one stage or multiple stages, you may experience some of the typical discomforts associated with any type of dental surgery, such as:

* Swelling of your gums and face
* Bruising of your skin and gums
* Pain at the implant site
* Minor bleeding

You may need pain medications or antibiotics after dental implant surgery. If swelling, discomfort or any other problem gets worse in the days after surgery, contact your oral surgeon.

After each stage of surgery, you may need to eat soft foods while the surgical site heals. Typically, your surgeon will use stitches that dissolve on their own. If your stitches aren't self-dissolving, your doctor removes them.