

What can dental implants do for me?

Dental implants provide a level of self-confidence that dentures, bridges and other kinds of tooth replacement cannot. Eating, smiling, and speaking with implants are as normal as with natural teeth. The embarrassment, irritation, and self-consciousness often experienced by people who wear dentures or who have suffered through other methods of tooth replacement are overcome with the confidence of permanently anchored dental implants. Today, for hundreds of thousands of people around the world, dental implants are a new-found source of security and confidence in family, social, and business activities.

What is the procedure like?

After a brief consultation, your dentist ensures the implant is your best alternative by completing a radiograph of the site (x-ray), taking bone soundings and building a model tomograph of the missing tooth site. This both confirms the appropriateness of the procedure and gives your dentist needed information to fashion a 3D surgical guide stent. On your next visit, after a local anesthetic is administered, your dentist places the tapered implant into the site during a short procedure. This is allowed to heal and integrate with your natural bone usually for three months, while a crown "tooth" is made to go on top of the implant. Your dentist can share a series of pictures which graphically illustrates each part of the procedure.

There is no doubt in my mind in placing dental implants on my patients, that Basic Dental Implants is my first choice.

—Michael D. Haight, DDS



4630 Eubank NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111

Toll Free 1.888.888.1468
Fax 505.298.7227

www.basicdentalimplants.com
email: info@basicdentalimplants.com



What Can BASIC Dental Implants Do For You?



Dental Implants Information and Considerations

Today, one out of two adults is missing one or more teeth. Depending on the location of the missing tooth, this not only can change the appearance and aesthetics of the face and smile, it may also cause the surrounding teeth to shift. This may result in hygiene problems, reduced chewing function, wear and tear on surrounding teeth, and long-term dental problems. Clearly, doing nothing is not a good alternative.

What are the alternatives?

Each natural tooth is secured to your jaw using one to four natural roots. This stabilizes the tooth and acts as a shock absorber when the top of the tooth is called upon to tear or chew food. There are three basic ways a tooth may be "replaced" to keep the dental arch intact. A removable partial denture (RPD), a non-removable partial denture (NRPD) or "bridge" where usually the two or more teeth adjacent to the missing tooth site must be violated to some degree. The third, is a titanium root dental implant placed into the jaw that anchors a prosthetic crown. Because dental implants stand alone, they do not depend on adjacent teeth for support.

What is a dental implant?

Dental implants are today's best alternative to natural teeth. They are tooth replacements that allow you to function more normally than conventional dentures and bridges. Made out of durable, pure titanium, the only FDA approved material, a dental implant mimics the tooth's natural root by attaching the prosthesis or crown, the visible part of the tooth, to the bone. They can be the foundation for greatly improved smiles and overall facial appearance.

Are there risks associated with a dental implant?

Yes. Statistically one in twenty (1 in 20) implants will fail when the surrounding bone will not heal to the titanium “root”. When this happens, the implant must be removed, allowing the “socket” to heal. In the dental literature there have been cases where there is a temporary or permanent loss of nerve sensation following implant placement. This results in a numb feeling, but does not result in a sagging of the face because motor nerves are never affected.

How long will implants last?

This is a question no one can answer. Some implants have been functioning well for twenty years or more but this is not an average because so many factors come into play – changing health conditions, genetic predisposition, detrimental habits, improper oral hygiene, etc. It is comforting to know, however, that if and when the implant does become unstable for whatever reason, only it, and not other teeth it is “affixed” to, is jeopardized because it stands alone.

Does patient age matter?

No. Only health may be a precluding factor. Many people in their seventies or eighties are better candidates than younger people with physical problems.

Are implants expensive?

They may be in certain instances when the treatment is extensive and a specialist is called in for complicated reconstruction situations. Your doctor will advise you about these special conditions. Our implant was specifically designed to be placed by a general dentist

in a single missing tooth site with adequate supporting teeth adjacent to the site. For this reason, the risk is much less and chances for a good outcome are increased. Also for this reason, costs are kept down and are nearly the same as those for a non-removable partial denture (bridge) without the need to cut down teeth on either side of the site.

Will insurance pay for implants?

Possibly, but not typically. At this time, unless specifically covered in your policy, insurance companies will not cover implants. This will change in time. Sometimes they will cover the expense of the crown affixed to the implant, however.

Is this going to hurt?

As with any procedure where tissue is entered, there is potential for discomfort. But using local anesthetic, the discomfort is usually minimized if there is any at all. Most of our patients are very surprised by the comfort of the placement.

How much time does it take?

This depends on certain conditions, but usually less time than it would take to prepare the teeth for a bridge. Since with our technique there is only one placement procedure, including the impression for the crown, usually no follow-up surgery is indicated. Several months must pass, however, while bone healing to the implant takes place (osseointegration) before the crown is placed and the “tooth” becomes fully functional.

Will I miss any work?

Usually one-half to one day. You can expect to sense some feeling of slight pressure in the bone and to the surrounding teeth for a day or two, but if this continues more than 24 hours we need to be informed.

Are there rejection problems?

Usually, no. There can always be that isolated instance, but because chemically pure titanium is used and not something once living, the likelihood of a rejection response is very remote.

Can an implant cause cancer?

There have been no instances reported in the dental or medical literature indicating a dental implant as being the cause of a cancer.

What is insufficient bone?

When a tooth has been missing for some time the healing of the socket usually includes a “shrinking” of the bone. This shrinkage may be of a magnitude that won’t allow a titanium root to be placed and still have enough bone around it to secure healing. However, now we can have types of bone added to the bone site to give us the necessary bulk needed. This is called augmentation. Sometimes vital structures may be too close to the proposed implant site to allow for placement. The density of the bone may be insufficient to allow for good healing. All of these factors will be taken into consideration when your doctor evaluates you for sufficient site bone.

How do I get a Dental Implant?

Although implants are a great solution, they are not for everyone. Your certified dentist can conduct a four-step evaluation to ensure a single tooth implant is the right solution for

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you. Your dentist will give you a short questionnaire to complete, followed by taking a radiograph (x-ray) of the surrounding bone. Then, after conducting a partial bone mapping procedure, your dentist will consult with you about the findings. If you fit the criteria, the procedure can be scheduled based upon your specific situation. If this single tooth implant is not the right procedure for you, your dentist will discuss the alternatives and together agree on a treatment plan.

If you have any questions not covered in this handout, please note them below and feel free to ask your certified dentist any questions that you wish.

Basic Dental Implants are placed by your general dentist so there is usually no need to see a specialist.

