



# Dental Implants

## What are dental implants?

In a lot of cases missing teeth can be replaced by implants. Dental implants are essentially surgical titanium screws (made of similar materials to those used in artificial joint replacements) which are the same shape as the original roots of your own teeth. After they have been fitted into the bone of your jaw and have healed in place, dentures or crowns can be attached to them.

Placement of a dental implant to replace a single tooth, often avoids the need for wasteful tooth destruction of the teeth next to the gap - for what dentists call bridges. An implant also provides a more attractive alternative to a bridge and is far more predictable and reliable.

Dentures may also be either permanently or temporarily fixed to implants, enabling the denture wearer to eat the foods that they have not been able to eat in the past with far more confidence and comfort. In some cases, the denture can be replaced altogether and an implant retained bridge used in its place.

## What are the success rates?

Many long term studies have been carried out into the success of implants and the average 10-year survival rate is between 95 and 98%.

In fact of the early implants placed over 30 years ago, 85% are still in function today. Provided the implants once successfully integrated into your bone are cleaned properly then the long term survival is almost 100%.

Success of implants can be increased substantially by following the post operative instructions with special attention to the reduction of nicotine use.

## Does the surgery require a hospital stay?

No! This is a simple surgical procedure which can be performed in your dentist's surgery and results in no more after discomfort than an ordinary tooth extraction.

## What are the alternatives?

For people who have no teeth at all - complete dentures

For people who still have teeth present

- partial dentures - these are removable pieces of plastic with plastic teeth on which can be hard to keep in and can cause gum problems.

- bridges supported by teeth -these are fixed restorations which attach to the teeth next to the space where the tooth is missing, these can involve a lot of destruction to the affected teeth and reduce the life span of these teeth.

The advantages of these alternatives to implants are that they are cheaper than the implant option whereas the disadvantages are that they can be detrimental to gum health and reduce the length of life of the teeth either side of the gap.





### Alternatives to Implants

- Nothing – This means spaces are retained
- Bridges + Cheaper, no surgery
  - Very destructive to surrounding teeth, don't retain bone, don't look as good, put extra strain on teeth they are attached too, more likely to fail than implants.
- Denture + Cheaper, no surgery
  - Less well tolerated, removable, causes bone loss, damage to gums, don't look good, cause speech problems, reduce taste sensation

### How long does the treatment take?

From start to finish the answer really depends upon the treatment required. In some cases a single tooth can be placed with only 3-4 weeks between implant placement and fitting of the permanent crown, and this may involve only 2-3 visits to your dentist. More complex cases can take several months from start to finish and involve a few more visits.

### How quick will I be back to normal?

After treatment with simple painkillers in most cases patients find they are able to return to work the following day after surgery.

### Will I be left with a space after implant placement?

If you wear a denture then this can be adapted to fit over the area of implant placement temporarily and worn as normal.

If the implants are to replace recently lost teeth then a temporary denture can be made until healing has occurred or your dentist may be able to make a temporary crown on top of your implant. These alternatives can be discussed with your dentist.

### What if there is not enough bone to put the implant in?

In cases like this bone or bone substitutes can often be grafted/placed into the area into which the implant is to be placed and this would be discussed with you. If bone grafts are not an option then in this case implants would not be appropriate. The amount of bone you have present and its quality can be assessed on either x-rays or with a CT scan which your dentist will discuss with you.

### What do implants cost?

This depends upon the complexity of the case, prices usually start from approximately £1800 for a single tooth implant and crown, and £3000 for an implant retained full denture.

### Do certain medical conditions prevent treatment?

There are certain medical conditions which would prevent the placement of implants such as severe heart disease, liver disease, diabetes etc. These would be discussed with your dentist.

# Dental Implants





## Possible risks

Implants which fail are a very small percentage and these need removal which is a simple procedure.

Post operative infection is the usual cause of failure and this is why your dentist will on occasion prescribe antibiotics.

Post operative discomfort is usually minimal and easily managed with painkillers.

## What can I do to help make the procedure a success?

- Stop smoking
- Rinse with chlorhexidine 2 days prior to surgery
- Adhere to oral hygiene instructions
- Adhere to instruction leaflet
- Take prescribed medication

## How soon will I recover?

If sedated you must be accompanied to the surgery and refrain from operating machinery or driving for 24 hours. If not sedated you are not restricted from normal everyday activities BUT should avoid strenuous exercise for 24 hours.

## What does the operation involve?

- 1) Pre Assessment
  - History
  - Xrays and/or CT scan
  - Bone assessment and map
  - Impressions for models
- 2) Pre Surgery Assessment
  - To try in surgical templates
  - To show a wax up of what the completed treatment will resemble
  - To give instructions and/or prescription for medicaments
  - To discuss consent procedure
- 3) Surgery
  - Local anaesthetic
  - A surgical gown will be worn by yourself and a hat placed
  - A hole will now be made for placement of the implant
  - An implant is now screwed into place this will then be covered over or impressions will be taken for a temporary restoration.
  - Sutures are then used to replace any gum moved aside for implant placement
  - X rays are taken during or after treatment.
- 4) After surgery review appointment
  - X ray is taken after surgery after an interval decided by your dentist
  - Once decided the implant is fixed to your bone then impressions will then be taken for the final restorations on your implants.

# Dental Implants

