



# Understanding Dental Implants

Dental implants are one of the greatest advancements in dentistry. An implant can replace a single tooth without involving the two adjacent teeth as with a bridge. They are much easier to clean because you can floss between them like a natural tooth. No more threading floss under a bridge! They are comfortable and look more natural than a bridge. If you have notable bone loss in the area of the implant, a bone graft might be required. The implant needs to integrate with the bone for strength.

## Types of Dental Implants

1. Endosteal: This is the most common type of dental implant. The dental implant is made of metal and “screwed” into the bone. After a few months the implant has integrated with the bone and an attachment is placed on it, which will hold the crown.
2. Sub periosteal: This type of implant is a metal framework that is placed under the gums with several ball type attachments that are outside the gums. Special dentures attach to the metal balls. They are detachable, but offer much more support. These are great for people who have lost a substantial amount of bone and can no longer keep a denture in their mouth.

## Advantages of Dental Implants

1. It enhances the appearance. The teeth look much more natural than a denture and they feel like your own teeth.
2. Implants can improve speech. You don't have to worry about your denture slipping out.
3. Improves comfort. No more sores from ill-fitting dentures.
4. Easy eating. Dental implants are strong and you can eat whatever you want without worrying about your denture slipping.
5. Develops better self-esteem. Implants give you your smile back and help you feel more comfortable.
6. Durable. Implants are sturdy and can last for a long time, even a lifetime with proper maintenance
7. Convenient. No more adhesive or soaking the dentures overnight.

## Who are candidates for Dental Implants?

In general, if you have already lost a tooth then you are now a candidate for dental implants. It is very important that you discuss your health history with your dentist and list all medications



that you are taking. Certain medical conditions can compromise the success of dental implants. You must be able to maintain your implants by flossing and brushing to regulate the bacteria in your mouth. It is important that you have your teeth professionally cleaned twice a year. Your dental hygienist will use special tools to clean around the implant and your dentist will check your implants to make sure they are still well integrated in the bone.

## Who places Dental Implants?

When implants were first introduced an oral surgeon or a gum specialist called a periodontist usually placed them. Now many general dentists take courses and are certified to place implants. It is less complicated to have one dental practitioner place the implant and do the crown. It is usually less expensive, as well.