

DENTAL IMPLANTS

101

Helping you navigate the
Dental Implant journey



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Welcome to the

DENTAL IMPLANTS 101

guidebook

Purpose of the Guidebook

Curious about Dental Implants? This guide is designed to give you clear and easy-to-understand information about dental implants, particularly Full Mouth and Full Arch implants. Whether you're missing one tooth or many, this guide will help you understand your options and what to expect. We'll cover everything from the basics of what dental implants are to the specific benefits of advanced solutions like All on 4 implants.

What are dental implants?

A dental implant is a small post, usually made of titanium, that serves as a replacement for the root of a missing tooth. It is surgically placed into the jawbone, where it fuses with the bone in a process called osseointegration. This creates a strong and stable foundation for a replacement tooth.

What makes up a Dental Implant?

When we refer to a dental implant, we're talking about the entire setup, which includes:

The Implant (Screw):

The titanium post that is surgically placed into the jawbone. This acts as a replacement for the root of a natural tooth and integrates with the bone through a process called osseointegration.

The Abutment:

The connector piece that is attached to the implant post. It sits above the gum line and serves as the attachment point for the replacement tooth or teeth

The Restoration:

For Single Dental Implants, a crown is placed on top of the abutment. The crown is

crewed or cemented into place, providing a natural-looking replacement for the missing tooth.

For Full Arch Dental Implants (**All on 4**) in cases where multiple teeth or an entire arch need replacement, a fixed bridge is used. This bridge is supported by at least four implants strategically placed in the jaw. The bridge is screwed into the abutments, providing a stable and permanent set of replacement teeth.

Together, these components restore both the function and appearance of natural teeth, allowing patients to chew, speak, and smile confidently



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE

7 Common Misconceptions about Dental Implants



Although dental implants have been around since the 1960s, they are often misunderstood. Misconceptions and myths about the procedure, cost, and outcome can create unnecessary concerns for those considering this option. To help clear up any confusion, we've compiled a list of the top 7 common misconceptions about dental implants and the truths behind them.

1 Dental implants are painful

Reality: While dental implant surgery is a surgical procedure, advancements in anesthesia and pain management mean that most patients experience only minor discomfort. During the procedure, local anesthesia is used to numb the area, and sedation options are available for those who are anxious. After the surgery, any discomfort can typically be managed with over-the-counter pain relievers. Most patients report that the discomfort is less than they expected.

2 Implants are only for the elderly

Reality: Dental implants are suitable for adults of all ages, not just the elderly. Anyone who has lost a tooth due to injury, decay, or other reasons can consider dental implants, provided they have sufficient bone density and good oral health. In fact, implants can be especially beneficial for younger patients who want a long-term solution for missing teeth.

3 Implants look fake and unnatural

Reality: Dental implants are designed to look and feel like natural teeth. The crowns that are placed on top of implants are custom-made to match the color, shape, and size of your natural teeth. Advances in dental technology, such as digital imaging and 3D printing, ensure that implants blend seamlessly with your smile.

4 The procedure is too expensive

Reality: While dental implants can have a higher upfront cost compared to other tooth replacement options, they are a long-term investment. Unlike dentures or bridges, which may need to be replaced or adjusted over time, implants can last many years, even a lifetime, with proper care. Additionally, many dental practices offer financing options to make the cost more manageable.

5 Implants require special care

Reality: Dental implants require similar care to natural teeth. This includes brushing twice a day, “flossing” with a WaterPik daily, and regular dental check-ups. Unlike dentures, implants do not require special cleaning solutions or adhesives. With good oral hygiene, implants can remain healthy and functional for many years.

6 The recovery time is too long

Reality: While the osseointegration process, where the implant fuses with the bone, can take several months, most patients can resume normal activities (with a soft diet) within a few days of the surgery. Immediate load implants, such as those used in All on 4 procedures, allow patients to leave the dental office with a temporary set of teeth on the same day as the surgery, reducing the impact on daily life.

7 Implants are not safe for everyone

Reality: Dental implants have a high success rate and are safe for most people. However, certain medical conditions, such as uncontrolled diabetes or heavy smoking, can affect healing and osseointegration. A thorough evaluation by a dental professional will help determine if implants are a suitable option for you. Even if you have a complex case, such as insufficient bone density, techniques like bone grafting or the use of advanced implants like zygomatic or pterygoid implants can make the procedure possible.

“Do I need dental implants?”

Dental implants are more than just a solution for missing teeth; they offer a range of benefits that can significantly improve your quality of life. Here’s why you might consider dental implants:



Missing Teeth

One of the most common reasons people consider dental implants is to replace one or more missing teeth. Whether due to injury, decay, or congenital conditions, missing teeth can affect your ability to chew and speak properly. Dental implants provide a stable and permanent replacement, restoring full functionality and appearance.

Tooth Decay and Damage

Severe tooth decay or damage that cannot be repaired with fillings, crowns, or root canals may require extraction. Dental implants can replace these lost teeth, preventing further oral health issues and maintaining the integrity of your bite.

Gum Disease

Advanced gum disease, or periodontitis, can lead to tooth loss and bone deterioration. After treating the gum disease, dental implants can replace the lost teeth and help restore oral health. They also support the jawbone, preventing further bone loss.

Injury or Trauma

Accidents or injuries that result in the loss of teeth can have a significant impact on your appearance and confidence. Dental implants provide a natural-looking and functional solution that can restore your smile and self-esteem.

Poorly Fitting Dentures

Dentures can sometimes feel uncomfortable, slip out of place, or cause difficulty eating and speaking. Dental implants offer a more secure and comfortable alternative, eliminating the need for adhesives and reducing the risk of embarrassing moments.

Bone Loss Prevention

Tooth loss can lead to the gradual loss of bone in the jaw, which can affect facial structure and lead to a sunken appearance. Dental implants stimulate the jawbone, just like natural teeth, helping to maintain bone density and facial integrity.

Long-term Solution

Unlike dentures and bridges, which may need to be replaced or adjusted over time, dental implants are designed to be a long-term solution. With proper care, implants can last a lifetime, making them a cost-effective option in the long run.

Enhancing Aesthetics & Confidence

Dental implants look, feel, and function like natural teeth. They are custom-made to match the color and shape of your existing teeth, providing a seamless appearance. This can greatly enhance your confidence and improve your overall quality of life.

Treatment Options for Tooth Replacement

Your confidence can take a hit when you're missing teeth. Additionally, missing teeth can affect your health more than you realize. In most cases, you're left with choosing between four options:

Dentures, Partials, Bridges, and Dental Implants

Dentures

Dentures are the most popular for those who are missing all or most of their teeth. However, dentures can be very difficult for daily use. If not secured with denture adhesive, they can slip out of place while eating or speaking.



Partials

Partial dentures (or flippers) can also lead to infection or tooth decay if they are not fitted properly. They need to be cleaned regularly or replaced on an annual basis if they show signs of significant wear - which can lead to regular office visits and ongoing costs.



Bridges

Traditional Bridges are another common solution for up to three missing teeth, but generally only work if there are some strong surrounding teeth to anchor the bridge to. Bridges also lack the ability to stimulate the bone in the areas of missing teeth - leading to bone loss and tooth



So how do Dental Implants compare?

Dental implants are permanent teeth replacements, and they've become a popular alternative to dentures over the past few years. While they cost more than dentures, they last longer and save you money over time. Dental implants lead to fewer visits to the dentist because they're easier to maintain compared to dentures.

With dental implants, you never have to worry about them falling out while speaking or laughing in social situations. Also, they feel more comfortable and look more natural than dentures. If you want to feel like you've never lost a tooth in the first place, dental implants are your best option!

Say goodbye to bone loss, periodontal disease, tooth decay and all the other dental issues you once faced. Dental implants can give you a second chance at a natural new smile, without the discomfort or embarrassment of removable prosthetics.

What are “All on 4” Implants?



WHAT ARE THEY?

All on 4 implants are a revolutionary solution for those who need a full set of teeth replaced. The “4” in All on 4 refers to the number of implants used to support a full arch of replacement teeth, which can range from four to six or more implants, depending on the specific case and jawbone condition. This innovative technique offers a stable, permanent, and aesthetically pleasing alternative to traditional dentures.



HOW DO THEY WORK?

The All on 4 procedure works by placing a specific number of dental implants into the jawbone. These implants serve as the foundation for a full arch of prosthetic teeth. Unlike individual dental implants that replace each missing tooth separately, All on 4 implants use fewer implants to support a whole set of upper or lower teeth. This is possible because the implants are strategically placed at specific angles to maximize support and stability.

All on 4 implants are an excellent option for those who have lost most or all of their teeth and are looking for a long-lasting, stable, and aesthetically pleasing replacement. They offer a significant improvement in quality of life, providing a secure, natural-looking smile that can boost confidence and improve overall oral health. If you're considering All on X implants, we're happy to discuss your options with you!

Am I a candidate for All on 4 Dental Implants?

Determining if you're a candidate for All on 4 dental implants involves assessing various factors related to your oral health and overall medical condition. This treatment is ideal for individuals who have lost most or all of their teeth and are looking for a permanent solution. Let's explore the criteria that make someone a good candidate for this innovative procedure.

Ask yourself the following questions to get an idea if you are an All on 4 Dental Implant candidate:

- Are you currently in a denture, partial, or have failing crown bridges?
- Are you looking for a solution that is comfortable, looks natural, and doesn't come out of the mouth?
- Do you have multiple missing, loose, or decaying teeth?
- Are you experiencing pain or bad breath as a result of your teeth?
- Have you had to give up the foods that you love because you can't chew or have trouble biting into the foods you desire?
- Do you feel embarrassed by your smile?
- Have you missed out on events, family functions, or been turned down job opportunities because of your smile?
- Is your dental situation holding you back from enjoying life?

If you answered YES to one or more of these questions, give our office a call today to schedule your Dental Implant consultation. After we complete your comprehensive oral health examination and analyze your 3D Xray, we'll let you know if you're a candidate for dental implants.

What is the Dental Implant procedure?

The process of getting dental implants typically involves multiple visits, each crucial for ensuring a successful outcome. While each dental office may have slight variations in their process, the general steps are as follows:

Visit 1: Initial Consultation and Evaluation

The journey begins with a thorough consultation where your dentist evaluates your oral health. This includes discussing your medical history, conducting a physical examination, and taking X-rays to assess bone density and structure. This visit helps the dentist determine your suitability for dental implants and create a personalized treatment plan.

Visit 2: Digital Scans

In this step, advanced digital imaging techniques are used to create detailed 3D scans of your mouth. These scans help in planning the precise placement of the implants and ensuring that the final restoration will fit perfectly. The digital scans provide a comprehensive view of your jawbone and soft tissues, which is essential for accurate implant placement.

Visit 3: Surgery (Extractions and Implant Placement)

If necessary, any remaining damaged or decayed teeth are extracted. The implants are then surgically placed into the jawbone. This procedure involves making small incisions in the gums to expose the bone, followed by drilling holes to place the implant posts. In many cases, temporary teeth are placed on the implants the same day, providing you with a functional and aesthetic solution while the implants heal and integrate with the bone.

Visit 4: Postoperative Visit(s)

Postoperative visits are scheduled to monitor your healing and ensure that the implants are integrating properly with the jawbone. These check-ups are crucial for tracking your progress and addressing any concerns. Your dentist will also provide guidance on how to care for your temporary teeth and manage any discomfort during the healing period.

Visit 5: Final Scans and Final Approval

Once the implants have fully integrated with the jawbone, final digital scans are taken to capture the precise positioning and condition of the implants. These scans are used to design the final restorations, ensuring they fit perfectly and function correctly. This visit may also include a fitting of a wax model to preview the final results.

Visit 6: Final Zirconia Delivery

The final step involves placing the custom-made zirconia restorations onto the implants. Zirconia is a strong, durable material that mimics the appearance of natural teeth. During this visit, the final teeth are attached to the implants, completing the process. Your dentist will make any necessary adjustments to ensure a perfect fit and comfortable bite.

Understanding the Costs of Dental Implants

Dental implants are a significant investment in your oral health and overall well-being. While they may have a higher initial cost compared to other tooth replacement options like dentures or bridges, their long-term benefits and durability often make them a cost-effective solution over time. Here's a general overview of the financial aspects of dental implants:

Factors Influencing the Cost of Dental Implants

Several factors can influence the total cost of dental implants, including:

Number of Implants: The more implants needed, the higher the cost. A single implant costs less than a full arch of implants, such as in All on 4 procedures.

Type of Restoration: The type of restoration (crown, bridge, or denture) that will be placed on top of the implants can also affect the cost.

Material Used: The materials used for the implant post and the restoration (such as titanium for the implant and zirconia for the crown) can influence the price.

Location and Expertise: The location of the dental practice and the expertise of the dental professional can also play a role in the overall cost. Highly experienced specialists may charge more for their services.

Additional Procedures: Sometimes, additional procedures like bone grafts, sinus lifts, or extractions may be necessary to prepare the mouth for implants, adding to the total cost.

Financing Options and Insurance

While dental implants can be costly, many dental offices offer various financing options to make the procedure more affordable. These options may include:

Payment Plans: Some dental practices offer payment plans that allow you to spread the cost of the procedure over several months or years, making it more manageable.

Dental Loans: Specialized dental loans can provide the funds needed for the procedure, with repayment plans suited to your budget.

Credit Cards: Some patients use credit cards to finance their dental implants, especially those with low-interest rates or promotional offers.

Dental Savings Plans: These plans are an alternative to traditional dental insurance and offer discounts on dental services, including implants.

It's important to note that most dental insurance plans do not cover the full cost of dental implants, as they are often considered an elective procedure. However, insurance may cover part of the cost, such as the initial consultation, extractions, or part of the restoration. It's essential to check with your insurance provider to understand what aspects of the implant process are covered.

Investing in dental implants can have significant long-term benefits, both aesthetically and functionally. While the initial cost may seem high, the durability, comfort, and health advantages of dental implants often outweigh the investment. Consult with your dental professional to explore your options and find the best financial solution for your needs.

FAQs

1. What are dental implants made of?

Dental implants are typically made of titanium, a biocompatible material that forms a strong bond with the surrounding bone and tissues. This ensures that the implant provides a stable and long-lasting foundation for the replacement tooth. Titanium's durability also supports the full functionality of a natural tooth.

2. What if there isn't enough bone to support the implant?

If a patient lacks sufficient bone to support a dental implant, a procedure called bone grafting or bone augmentation can be performed. This process involves adding bone material to the jawbone to create a stable foundation for the implant. In many cases, this can be done during the same appointment as the implant placement. Advanced implants like Zygomatic and Pterygoid implants exist for this reason also.

3. How long do dental implants last?

Dental implants have a high success rate, with studies showing a survival rate of around 95-98% over a 10-year period. With proper care and maintenance, they are designed to last for many years, potentially even a lifetime. Factors like smoking, oral hygiene, and diet can affect the longevity of implants.

4. How much do dental implants cost?

The cost of dental implants varies based on factors such as the location in the mouth, whether additional procedures like tooth extractions or bone grafting are needed, and the specific type of implant used. It's best to consult with a dental professional for an accurate estimate.

5. Can the cost of dental implants be spread over time?

Yes, many dental offices offer payment plans to help manage the cost of dental implants. Typically, the payment can be divided into two parts: one for the implant placement and another for the final crown or restoration. Some offices also offer interest-free payment plans over a specific period.

6. Will the procedure be painful?

Most patients experience only minor discomfort during the dental implant procedure, often less than that of a tooth extraction. Local anesthesia is used to numb the area, so while you may feel pressure, there should be no pain. For those who are nervous, options like oral sedation can help make the experience more comfortable.

7. Do I need to take time off work after getting dental implants?

Recovery time varies from person to person. Many patients can return to work 2-3 days after the procedure, but this depends on the individual's response to the surgery and the nature of their work. Your dentist will provide specific recommendations based on your situation.

8. Will I have a gap while the implants are healing?

No, you won't be left with a gap. Temporary solutions such as bridges or retainers can be used to cover any spaces during the healing period. This ensures that your smile remains intact while the implants integrate with the bone.

BOOK YOUR FREE CONSULTATION NOW



 (760) 406-5966

 1921 E Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262

 palmspringsdentalgroup.com

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