



What is a dental implant?

A dental implant is designed around the structure of a natural tooth.

Two main attributes of a natural tooth are:

- The crown that sits above the gums
- The root that sits securely below the gum

The crown

The crown is designed to aesthetically mirror a healthy tooth which feels natural when placed in the mouth.

The implant

The role of the implant is to act like a real tooth, and if you look after it properly it may last a lifetime. The implant stimulates the bone molecules to attach themselves to the titanium thread of the implant providing a completely stable foundation for the crown. This process is known as osseointegration, with a healing period of between 8-12 weeks, as this is the duration of time in which the bone securely bonds to the entire implant surface.

Missing a single tooth

A single implant is designed to support a single crown. The treatment is simple and the procedures are very minor when carried out by experienced surgeons.

Missing multiple teeth

A fixed implant bridge involves the placements of two dental implants. The implant provides stability and stimulates the surrounding bone, which as a result prevents significant bone loss. The crowns are then fabricated and connected to the implants with a centre crown which fits over the gums – called a bridge.



Missing all your teeth

You only need 4-6 implants to support a bridge of all of the missing teeth, significantly reducing the bone loss which occurs with conventional dentures. Dental implants will provide you with a stable long term solution that reduces the pain and instability that denture patients experience.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO HAVING A DENTAL IMPLANT:

- PARTIAL DENTURE

These are an economical and quick solution, however, people often decide not to go with this option, as dentures often prove bulky and uncomfortable. Dentures can often increase the loss of bone and effect the supporting teeth in the process.

- STICK-ON BRIDGE

These are a good solution in some cases, however they tend to be at risk of falling out when biting force is placed on the bridge. With the absence of the natural tooth root, the bone above the crown begins to shrink.

- FIXED BRIDGE

A high speed drill cuts out a significant amount of the neighbouring teeth's natural structure to prepare them to take a bridge. This of course damages the teeth and shortens their lifespan.

- THE CONSEQUENCES OF DOING NOTHING

Failing to replace teeth that are lost will increase the forces that the remaining teeth have to withstand when chewing. This will result in additional teeth potentially being lost as the chewing forces on the remaining teeth increase more and more.