

Implants

A dental implant is a small screw-shaped attachment usually made from titanium. It is inserted into the jaw bone to take the place of a missing tooth root. Once the bone attaches firmly to the implant, called 'osseointegration', a replacement tooth can be secured on top. The new tooth will generally be fitted to the implant 4 – 5 months later. This new tooth can look just like a natural tooth. Implants can also be used to support a bridge or a denture.



Implants secured or stabilised to replacement teeth are more comfortable than conventional dentures because there is no slipping or movement. This eliminates some of the key worries of dentures and improves self-confidence.

What is involved in the implant process?

1. Consultation and treatment planning

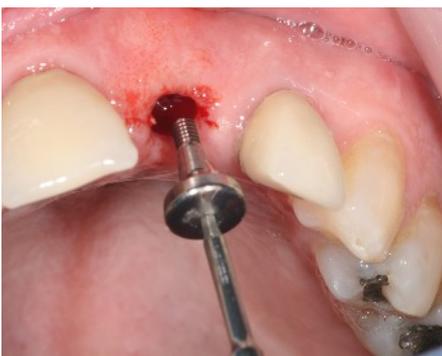
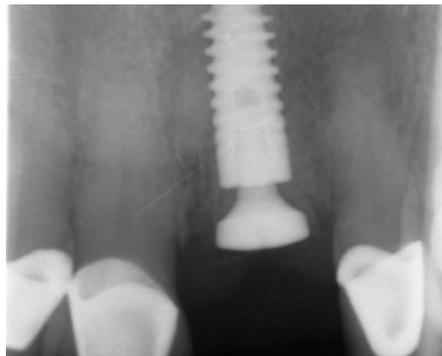
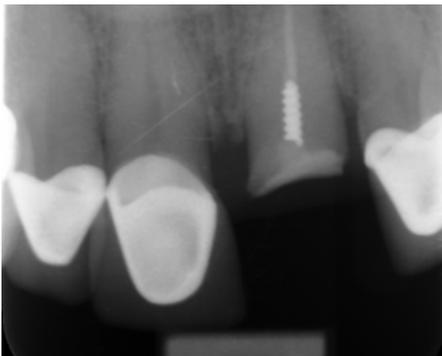
This involves a full mouth assessment; X-rays and a CT scan if necessary. A full treatment plan letter with exact costs and time scales is sent to you before your second consultation. At the second consultation, impressions of your teeth may be taken to make models to show how your teeth fit and work together and your dentist may take clinical photographs.

1. Implant placement

This is a relatively minor surgical procedure. It is carried out using local anaesthetic and if you are feeling anxious can be accompanied by some oral sedation – we use Temazepam. All implants are placed under sterile conditions. Once the implant has been inserted into the bone the surgeon will then put some stitches in to help the gum heal together and cover the implant. These stitches are dissolvable and can take up to a week to disappear completely.

2. Review

The next appointment is usually around 2 weeks after the implant surgery and the purpose is for your surgeon to check the area where the implants have been placed and ensure you're healing.



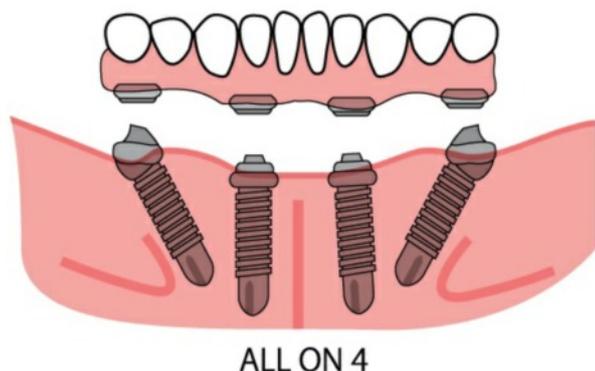
4. The Integration Period

After this you will usually have to wait between 3 and 5 months for the implant and bone to knit together. During this time any gap you have in your teeth will have a temporary bridge or denture to fill the space.

5. The Restoration Period

This can take between 2 – 5 appointments and between 2- 8 weeks depending on the amount of appointments required.

At the first appointment your surgeon will expose the top of the implant. Next they will take impressions of the tooth/teeth to send to the laboratory so they can begin the process of making your Bridge, Crown or Denture. The amount of appointments in the restorative phase varies mainly because of the amount of teeth which need to be restored and the type of restoration you are having made. When making a crown or bridge to go on top of your implant/implants the final restoration will either be screw-on or it will be cemented in.



Frequently asked questions

Is dental implant treatment painful?

Patients are often surprised at how little discomfort they experience during and after implant procedures.

How long will I be out of action after I have had the procedure?

This does vary on the amount of implants you have and whether you opt for oral sedation. We usually recommend that you clear your diary for 48 hours after the procedure.

Will I be able to eat what I want afterwards?

Once treatment is completed, you should be able to eat a normal, healthy diet with little or no difficulty. Most patients go on to eat a normal meal the day after surgery. It is recommended that you clean the area thoroughly after eating.

How long will a dental implant take?

A range of treatments is available. Usually treatment requires a series of appointments spread over several months. Occasionally implant treatment can be undertaken and completed in a much shorter period, possibly in a day.

How long will my implant last?

Once treatment is completed, a routine of careful dental hygiene and regular dental check-ups should ensure that implants last for many years.

Am I too old for implant treatment?

There is no upper age limit for patients to undergo implant treatment, provided they continue to enjoy good general health.