

DENTAL IMPLANTS

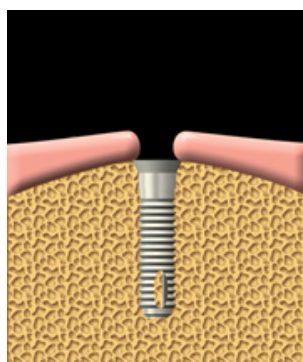
If one or more of your teeth are missing, there are a number of ways to replace them. An alternative to bridges, partials or complete dentures may be dental implants. Implants are used to replace missing roots and support artificial replacement teeth. They are comfortable and look like natural teeth.

A dental implant is an artificial root made of titanium metal. It is inserted into the jawbone to replace the root of the natural tooth. An artificial replacement tooth is attached to the implant. The implant acts as an anchor to hold the replacement tooth in place.

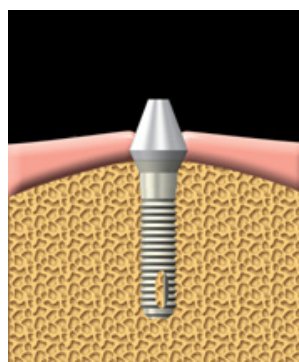
HOW DENTAL IMPLANTS ARE DONE:

Your dentist or specialist will carefully examine your mouth and take X-rays of your head, jaw and teeth to find out if dental implants are right for you.

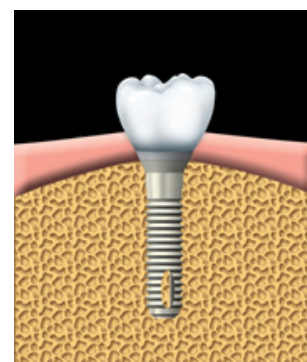
- During the first stage of surgery, your dentist or specialist will put a dental implant into your jawbone beneath the gum tissue. The gum tissue is then stitched back into place. As the tissue heals, the implant will bond with the bone and attach to the gum. It can take several months to heal.
- During the second stage of surgery and once the tissue is healed, your dentist or specialist will attach an abutment to the implant. An abutment is a post that connects the replacement tooth to the implant. In some cases, the first and second stage of implant surgery may be done in one single stage.
- Once an artificial replacement tooth is made, your dentist or specialist attaches it to the abutment. It may take several appointments.
- When replacing several teeth or all of your teeth, a fixed bridge is anchored to your dental implants. A bridge is a dental restoration that replaces one or more missing teeth by spanning an area that has no teeth. The bridge is held firmly in place by dental implants on each side of the missing tooth or teeth.



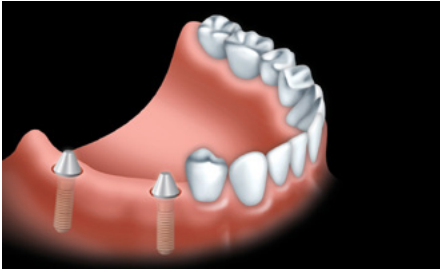
A dental implant is inserted into the jawbone.



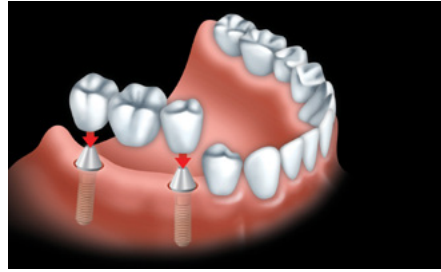
An abutment is attached to the implant. The abutment connects the artificial tooth to the implant.



An artificial tooth is attached to the abutment. Properly fitting the artificial tooth may take several appointments.



A fixed bridge is anchored to dental implants to replace one or more teeth.



A fixed bridge is anchored to dental implants to replace all teeth.

CARE OF DENTAL IMPLANTS

Because dental implants are placed in the jawbone, artificial replacement teeth attached to implants look and act much like natural teeth. You will need to brush and floss implants just as you do natural teeth. Your dentist will show you the proper cleaning procedure for implants. Regular dental exams are important so your dentist can make sure that your bite is right and your implants are secure.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Although rare, possible complications due to dental implants include bleeding, infection, numbness or injury to nearby muscles or the sinus cavity. In some cases, the implant may not be successful because it didn't bond to the bone.

