

### **What is a Dental Implant?**

A Dental Implant is a titanium metal replacement for the root of a tooth, that is surgically implanted into the jawbone. Implants are one of the most successful restorations of modern times. Once successfully placed, an implant can support an abutment and crown that is like a natural tooth. It is natural looking, strong, doesn't decay, and conservative. You don't have to cut or prepare the teeth on either side of the missing tooth, as would be required with a fixed bridge or removable partial denture restoration.

If dentures don't work for you, they can be stabilized greatly with implant attachments.

### **What is the process like?**

Dr. Alleman feels that you are a good candidate for dental implants if you are reasonably healthy, have jawbone ridges that are in good shape and have healthy oral tissues.

The process starts with a thorough review of the patient's medical and dental history, and a complete examination of the entire mouth and oral structures. The clinical examination. Includes specific x-ray, jaw models and digital photos, if necessary. (These are essentially the same records required for restorative bridges or partials.) After evaluation of the exams and records, all options are reviewed with the patient, and reasonable treatment plan is formed.

The implants are surgically placed in the bone under local anesthesia. The process may sound scary but it really isn't too much different than having a filling done, or having a tooth out. If the patient desires, sedation with nitrous oxide or oral conscious sedation is available. Dr. Alleman has had extensive training and experience with surgical implant placement and implant prosthetics and most implant placement and restorations are done in our office.

The length of healing time is based on the quality and quantity of the bone as well as the type of implant or graft that was placed. After adequate healing has been allowed to occur, the implants can be used to support crowns, bridges, or dentures.

### **How many implants should be placed?**

A good rule of thumb is that one implant should be placed for each tooth to be replaced. A wobbly removable denture can be snugly stabilized with two to four implants.

### **What's the best treatment now days?**

Root canal/post and core buildup/crown: This is the traditional way to restore a badly broken down tooth that still had a solid root. Drawback is its relatively high failure rate due to leakage, recurrent decay and root fracture. Usually takes 2-3 visits. Cost: least, Value: lowest \$800/\$200/\$800= \$1800

Extraction/ 3 unit fixed bridge: This is the traditional way to restore a space replacing an extracted tooth. Drawback is that two natural and healthy teeth have to be cut down to fit as abutments for a three unit fixed bridge. Drawback is that cleaning is a problem since three teeth are essentially joined together and puffy gums and bad breath are common. Drawback is that natural contours of the gums are often compromised leading to increased gum disease and discomfort. Usually takes 2-3 visits. Cost: medium, Value: medium  
 $\$200/\$800/\$800/\$800 = \$2600$

Extraction/implant/abutment/ crown -- This is still a mystery to most people- and to most dentists as well, but in reality, it is fairly simple, represents a much better treatment than the previous two options, and should be considered the first and best method to restore a badly broken down tooth. Procedure is very predictable, durable and non invasive. Adjacent teeth are not touched. Cleaning is easy and contours of the gums are controllable. Drawback is 2-4 months healing time for osseointegration of the implant. Usually takes 2-4 visits. Cost: medium, Value: high  
 $\$200/\$1000/\$600/\$800 = \$2600$

Consider this: Once the implant is stable and the abutment is placed, you essentially have a strong new tooth that will not decay. It can be treated just like a natural tooth. It is not a potentially weak tooth as in option 1 and it is not a false tooth as in option 2. It can be treated like a real tooth in almost every way.

Consider this: Implant care consists of two phases, the Surgical Phase and the Restorative phase. Most general dentists only do the restorative phase. Dr. Alleman has the expertise to do both phases for your convenience.