



GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING DENTAL IMPLANTS

What are dental implants, and what are they used for?

Dental implants are small titanium cylinders that are placed into the jawbone to replace the roots of missing teeth. They have two primary uses: to replace missing teeth (either single or multiple), or to help hold dentures in place.

Are they safe? How successful are they?

Titanium is a biocompatible material, meaning the body accepts it. There are no reports of allergic reaction to the titanium alloys used for dental implants. Success rates are generally between 92% and 99%, depending upon the type of implant used, its location in the mouth, and the job it is being asked to perform. Primary reasons why they may fail include uncontrolled medical conditions and failure of patients to return to the dental office for maintenance. Very infrequently, there may be no detectable reason for implant failure!

I hear it takes a long time to complete treatment.

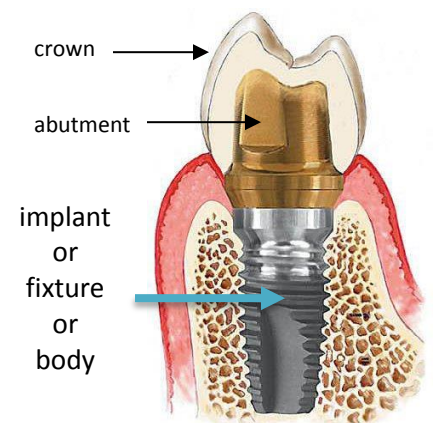
This is very dependent on individual situations. Sometimes treatment can be completed within a few weeks, and sometimes it can take over a year. For example, if you are missing a single tooth and the location is in dense bone, the implant can be placed and restored within a few months. However, if you need grafting in an area where the bone is already compromised, treatment can take over a year (this does NOT mean that all grafting slows down treatment).

Is it painful?

Discomfort levels vary. Some people experience absolutely no pain or swelling, while others may experience some. It also depends on what you're actually having done. Many people don't even require a pain prescription!

I need a single tooth replaced by an implant. What are the components?

Quite often the dental team and the patient will refer to a full tooth replacement as an "implant." Technically, this is not correct. The full tooth replacement is comprised of three parts: the implant, the abutment, and the crown. The implant is also known as a fixture or body. This is the titanium "screw" that is placed into the jawbone. The crown is the actual tooth that you see in your mouth. There is a hidden component, called an abutment, which acts as a connector between the implant and crown.



When implants are utilized with dentures, the crown is eliminated and the abutment will be replaced with other components.

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Diplomate of the American Board of
Oral Implantology / Implant Dentistry

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I'm a big chicken! Can you handle that?

Yup! We have a number of ways of making your dental procedures comfortable, ranging from nitrous oxide (laughing gas) to IV sedation. One of the biggest reasons for fear is the unknown. Before Dr. Goldberg starts any procedure, you will be well informed as to the whole process: This is a HUGE step to making you more comfortable!

I've heard implants are expensive. Is this true?

It depends on your outlook. Let's say a single-tooth implant costs you \$3,600. Sure, that's a lot of money. But if it lasts you 10 years, you've averaged \$360 per year for this investment (the implant body should last much longer: quite often, the esthetics of the crown dictate crown replacement). At the end of 10 years you probably just have to replace the crown for about \$1,200. Compare this to a bridge. If the bridge costs you \$3,600 and lasts 10 years, you will likely have to replace the entire bridge (\$3,600), possibly extend it to other teeth (more cost), and possibly have to do root canals (more cost).

When considering the expense of implants, don't forget to consider what may happen (and the resulting financial cost) if you DON'T replace missing teeth (see "Why Replace Missing Teeth" information sheet). When you lose just one tooth, not replacing it can affect the remaining teeth, and then you've got a mouthful of problems AND a large expense.

Implant treatment is typically broken up into "Phases," so payments can be broken up over time. Financing is also available. This helps people out tremendously, too.

How much will my insurance cover?

Unfortunately, insurance companies do not cover much towards implants, but we are beginning to see some changes. We typically will see no coverage towards the surgical placement of the implant, no coverage for the abutment, but some coverage for the crown. At our practice we will be more than happy to submit a pre-authorization for you to help determine insurance benefits. If you would like to do some investigation on your own, the three typical American Dental Association (ADA) Codes that are utilized are: D6010 (implant placement), D6056 (pre-fabricated abutment), and D6061 (porcelain fused to noble metal crown). Just be cautious regarding plan limitations, such as maximums, non-covered procedures, excluded procedures, alternate benefit clauses, and waiting periods.

I have dentures, as opposed to natural teeth. How can implants help me?

Implants can help you stabilize your dentures (whether full or partial dentures) or even completely eliminate them for you! Mini-implants are becoming more popular for denture-stabilization procedures, so you have another less expensive option at your disposal. Please refer to the other Implant Information Sheets for these options.

I have more questions! What do I do?

Feel free to attend one of our free, no obligation seminars, or call our office to schedule a consultation appointment! Dr. Goldberg will be more than happy to talk to you in more detail. The Internet is also a great place to continue exploring. We have provided some links below.

- Additional Resources:
1. WebMd: <http://www.webmd.com/oral-health/dental-implants>
 2. Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dental_implants
 3. American Academy of Implant Dentistry: <http://www.aaid.com/faq.html>
 4. International Congress of Oral Implantologists: <http://www.icoi.org/patient-ed.html>
 5. http://hcd2.bupa.co.uk/fact_sheets/html/dental_implants.html