

Implants

You have been given this sheet because you may be suitable for an implant retained prosthesis (crown, bridge or denture) to replace a missing tooth (teeth).

The information in this sheet will help you to be able to give informed consent to the procedure should you decide to proceed. The information in this sheet is of a general nature and your dentist will discuss your specific circumstances with you. It is expected you will ask questions about anything you don't understand or are concerned about.

What is an Implant ?

An implant is the term used to describe a titanium screw which is placed into the bone of the jaw or maxilla. The implant acts as an artificial root of a tooth and can be used as a platform to support artificial teeth, either as crowns and bridges or dentures.

What is involved in having an Implant(s)?

This varies depending on the individual case. Factors that vary include; what the final restoration on the implant will be, how many implants are being placed, the site of the implant placement, the amount of bone available at a site etc.

The basic sequence of events though is as follows:

Thorough assessment and treatment planning of suitability for implant placement including alternative options such as bridgework or partial dentures. This will usually involve taking a medical history, study models, x-rays, sectional CT scans and other measurements. There are fees associated with this process for which you will be quoted.

If the initial assessment is favourable then you can proceed to the surgical placement of the implant(s) in the appropriate site(s). If prior assessment determined lack of suitable bone at desired site(s) then a prior surgical appointment may be needed for augmentation of that site.

Surgical placement is usually carried out by a Periodontist.

Implants are left in the bone for 6-12 weeks to allow healing and osseointegration.

If healing and osseointegration are deemed to be successful then the implant(s) can be restored according to original treatment plan (i.e. with crowns or bridges or a denture). Regular follow up appointments for maintenance and cleaning are important.

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Advantages of Implants

Placement of an implant in functional occlusion reduces the loss of bone to normal levels in that area. Without replacement, bone loss is rapid.

Replacement of missing teeth with implant supported crowns as opposed to a denture removes the need for the denture framework. This leads to improved sensations (taste and temperature), speech, chewing ability, comfort as well as usually better aesthetics.

Implant retained dentures are very stable compared to 'normal' dentures and also usually need to cover less area and so are more comfortable.

The replacement of a single missing tooth with an implant-supported crown has the advantage over a bridge in that the implant does not require the preparation of the teeth on either side of the gap.

Success rate

Whilst it is impossible to predict individual results the scientific literature shows the success rate for implant retained prosthesis is high (around 95%).

Factors that can have an impact on success include the site of the implant; the quality and quantity of bone available ; the final use of the implant ; complicating medical issues such as ID Diabetes

Whilst a successful outcome usually occurs there is, however, no full-proof means of predicting success. If failure occurs, the implant would have to be removed. (note:smoking is also known to hinder healing and reduces implant success rates.)

Risks and Complications

As with any surgical procedure there is the possibility of pain, swelling, bruising and infection in the post-surgical period. The periodontist will discuss in detail any other particular risk factors pertinent to your individual situation.

Costs

Costs vary dramatically depending on many factors. You will be given a quote for your particular situation by StKildadentist. Generally initial costs for implants are higher than other options, though the suggested longevity of implants may make them much more cost effective in the long term.

More information on implants can be accessed at :

www.perio.org/consumer/2m.htm

www.ada.org/public/topics/implants.asp

