

Single Tooth Implants



If you are missing a single tooth, one implant and crown can replace it. A dental implant will provide a stable replacement without needlessly damaging adjacent teeth.

The advantages of a single tooth implant over old-fashioned bridgework are numerous. In addition to looking and functioning like a natural tooth, a dental implant replaces a single tooth without sacrificing the health of the neighboring teeth. The other common treatment for the loss of a single tooth, a tooth-supported bridge, requires that adjacent teeth be ground down to support the cemented bridge.

Because a dental implant will replace your tooth root, the bone is better preserved. With a bridge, some of the bone that previously surrounded the tooth begins to absorb (deteriorate). Dental implants integrate with your jawbone, fooling the bone into thinking a tooth still resides and thus keeps the bone healthy and intact.

In the long term, a single implant can be more esthetic and easier to keep clean than a bridge. Gums can recede around a bridge, leaving a visible defect when the metal base or collar of the bridge becomes exposed (especially evident in the front of your mouth!). Resorbed bone beneath the bridge can lead to a very unattractive smile. The cement holding the bridge in place can wash out allowing bacteria to decay the teeth that anchor the bridge. Most bridges are replaced due to recurrent decay as flossing is very difficult around bridgework.

Most often you will be able to wear a temporary during the healing phase of the implant procedure. Post operative instructions specific to you will be given and should be strictly adhered to. Implants are extremely successful but small precautions are always taken to insure the success of your therapy. Most patients tell us the most difficult part of the procedure is waiting the 90-180 days it takes for the implant to bond to the bone before the dentist can custom make the crown to complete the process. This is a small sacrifice for a lifetime of chewing and smiling comfort.