

DENTAL IMPLANTS

DR. TOM DONNELLY MSc BDS

41
SOUTH BAR

*“YOUR NUMBER ONE GUIDE
TO DENTAL IMPLANTS AT
41 SOUTH BAR.”*

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"OVER 20 YEARS DENTAL IMPLANT EXPERIENCE"



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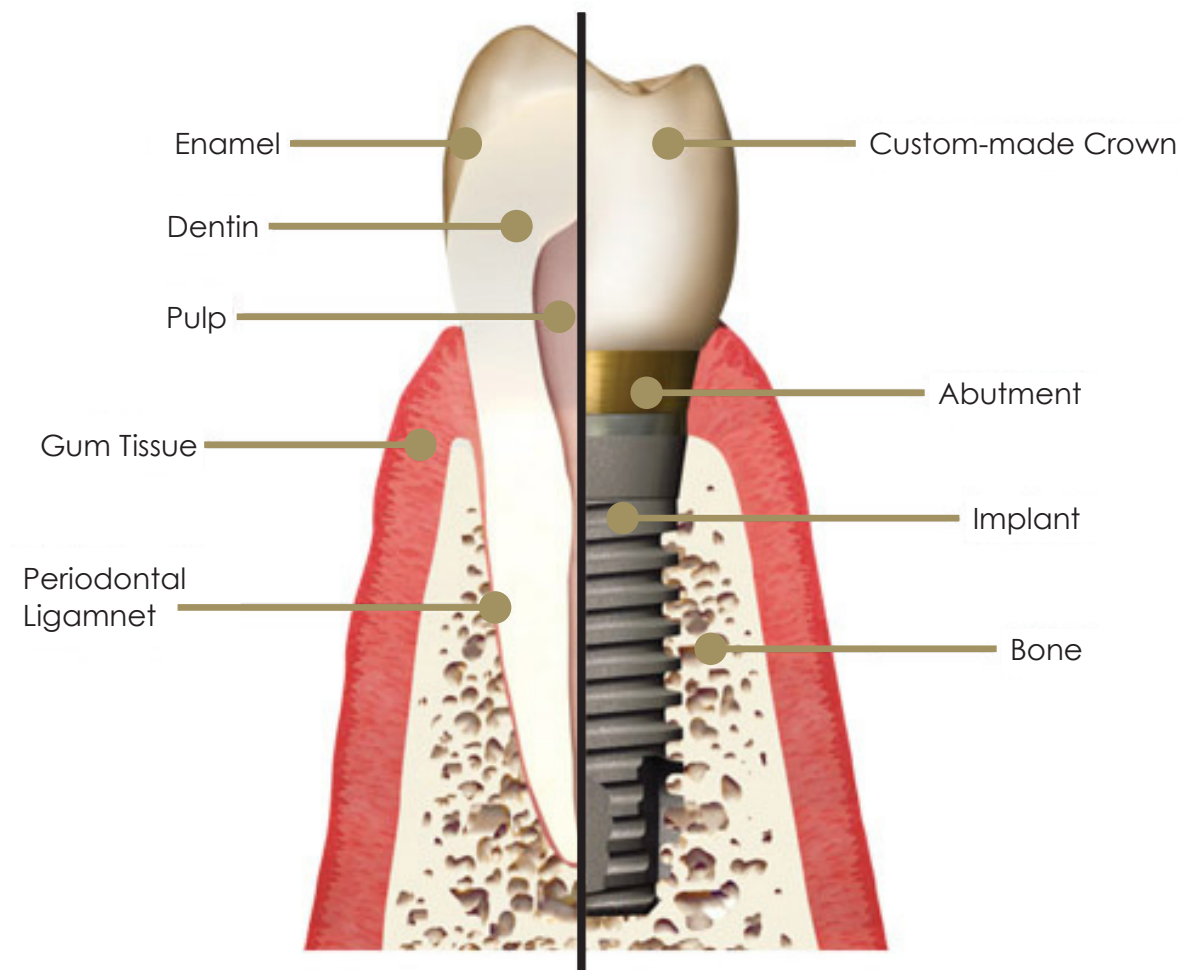
INTRODUCTION

We have very quickly come from a time when the expectation was that virtually everyone would lose some or all of their teeth and be left with dentures. We are no longer living in a time when we can expect dental disease and all of its attendant miseries.

There are still many people who suffer in silence with missing teeth and loose dentures, people who have failing teeth wondering what the future holds.

Now we have dental implants we can actually replace missing teeth helping to rebuild damaged mouths.

This great innovation has expanded massively worldwide as its potential is realised. It is not a universal remedy, but using dental implants allows spaces in the mouth to be filled without damaging existing teeth or to give support where there are no teeth at all.



WHAT ARE DENTAL IMPLANTS?

The vast majority of dental implants are made of titanium alloy and are roughly shaped like the root of one of your teeth. Titanium is used because your body will accept it, meaning it is biologically safe. This means the chance of an allergic reaction is incredibly small.

Common descriptions of implants, which help explain how they work, include 'screw-in-teeth', 'metal cylinders', 'metal anchors' or even 'wall plugs'. Each of these descriptions is to try to give you an idea of how dental implants work.

The main idea is that a dental implant is meant to be like the root of one of your teeth. In order for this to happen, it has to be strong enough to work in your mouth and allow the dentist to be able to attach a tooth or teeth to it.

Dental implants need to be inserted into enough jaw to support it, just as your tooth would have been. So being roughly the same shape as your tooth roots enables this to happen.

Most people, when they talk about dental implants are actually talking about the teeth attached to the implants. The implants themselves are generally hidden beneath or at gum level.

*“THE MAIN IDEA IS THAT A
DENTAL IMPLANT IS MEANT
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OF YOUR TEETH.”*

WHAT ARE DENTAL IMPLANTS USED FOR?

Once implants have been placed they can be used as supports for an individual tooth or teeth. They can be used to help fix a denture in place with small stud like fastenings. There use depends on what you actually need. Few problems cannot be fixed, but each case needs to be assessed carefully on its own merits and you need to decide on how far you are willing to go to achieve your particular end goal.

ARE IMPLANTS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Dental implants have very few restrictions. Age is no barrier. It is true that it is best not to delay too long after teeth have been removed as there is a natural process of bone shrinkage following tooth removal. This can make it more difficult to place an implant, but that is not a barrier to implant placement.

If you have a gap or dentures, an implant or implants can be a very good choice for you.

WHERE CAN THEY BE PLACED?

Implants can be placed virtually anywhere in your mouth. However, there are limitations because of the anatomy of our jaws, which can make some areas complicated and other areas almost impossible. You will need an assessment with Dr. Tom Donnelly to see if your particular problems can be resolved.

“THE PLANNING FOR DENTAL IMPLANTS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PLACING THE IMPLANTS... DENTAL LITERATURE SUGGEST THAT IF AN IMPLANT CAN SURVIVE THE FIRST YEAR THEN IT CAN LAST IN EXCESS OF 40 YEARS.”

WHAT IS INVOLVED?

The first steps with implant treatment are to have a full mouth assessment. This is extremely important for many reasons. Dental implants need enough jaw for support. They need to be well maintained in a healthy mouth to survive. The planning for dental implants is more important than placing the implants. Care has to be taken that disease processes that could impair the uptake of a dental implant have been resolved. Dental literature suggest that if an implant can survive the first year then it can last in excess of 40 years. There are few things that we can purchase that can last this long, but there is a maintenance requirement and this starts with a disease free mouth.

The implants are inserted into the jaw generally below the gum level. In some circumstances the implant comes to gum level but mainly the implant finishes at the jaw level. In single-stage surgery there will usually be a 'healing abutment' placed on top of the implant and the gum will heal around this. In other circumstances, the gum will completely cover the implant (two-stage surgery) while it is healing. This healing process is called osseointegration. These implants are then left for a period of time to osseointegrate prior to teeth being attached. For two- stage surgery

the implant/s will require to be uncovered after osseointegration and the gum left to heal usually with a healing abutment but sometimes with a temporary crown to help shape the gum.

In some circumstances it is possible to load the implants immediately. There are a number of names for this including 'teeth in an hour', 'teeth in a day' and so on. What this means is that enough planning, enough implants and technical work has been completed, to enable joining implants together to allow immediate function. There are limitations to this approach. There is evidence of increased risk of failure of implants in this situation, but it is useful and can be of help as long as there is sufficient planning and acceptance of the limitations of the technique.

Once osseointegrated, moulds are made of the mouth to allow the manufacture of the tooth/teeth/denture. The decision of what will be made will have been discussed before the implant will have even been placed. With this information, the technicians will begin to fabricate whatever has been planned. Shortly after the planned restoration will be placed to complete your smile.



IS IT PAINFUL?

It is surprising that there is generally little pain felt after the procedure. Most often, there is less discomfort than the loss of the original tooth or teeth. There can of course be exceptions, but the vast majority of implant placements proceed causing little pain or discomfort.

ARE THEY SAFE?

All the dental implants used in this country are required to have CE marking. This is an internationally recognised mark to show that the medical device has a high level of safety. Titanium alloy has proven track record of safety and is prized for its biocompatibility i.e. its ability to be accepted by our body.

HOW LONG DOES TREATMENT TAKE?

This is truly dependant on your particular situation. In the simplest of cases treatment time will still take a number of months from start to finish

*“IN GENERAL, IF A PERSON
IS HEALTHY THEN THEY CAN
BE SUITABLE FOR DENTAL
IMPLANTS.”*

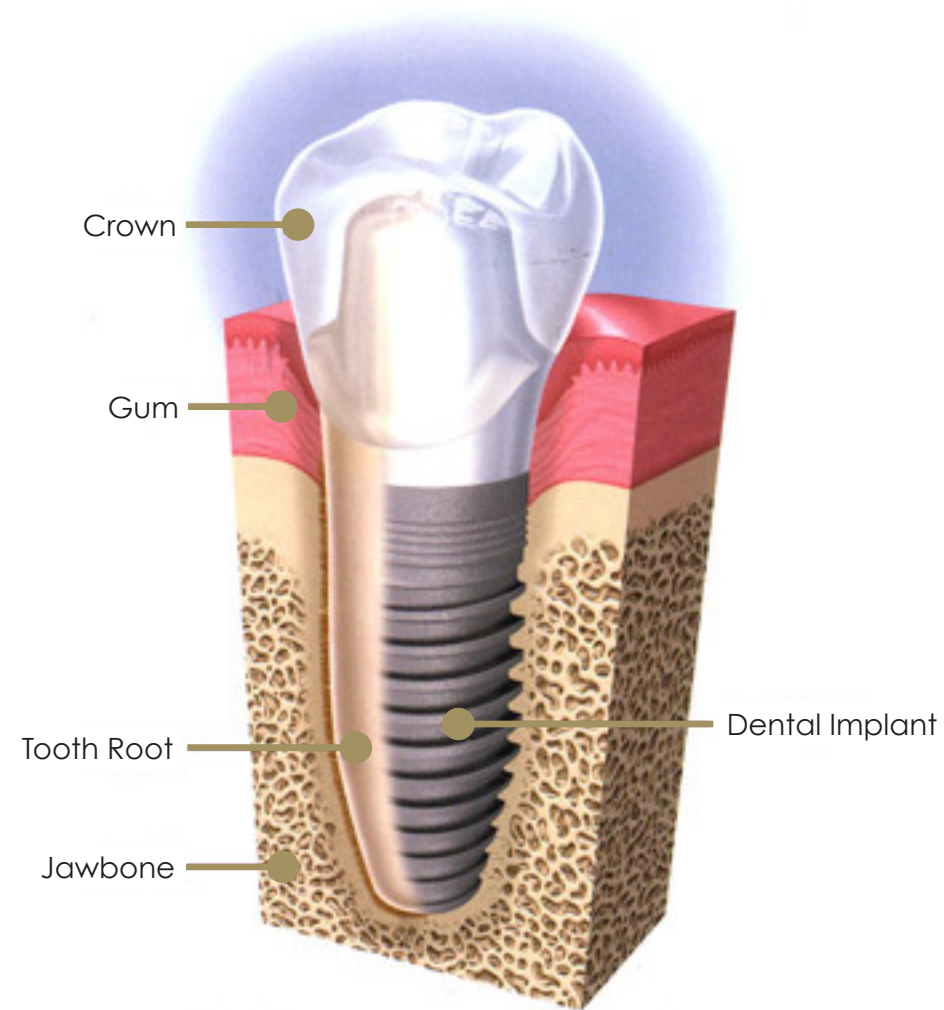
HOW CAN THEY BE USED?

An implant can be used to hold a single tooth. In combination with other implants a number of teeth can be attached for example, two implants may be able to support three or four teeth. Four implants may be able to support ten to twelve teeth. Six to eight implants may be able to support twelve to fourteen teeth. It is also possible for implants to be used as fixed supports for removable teeth, such as two implants can prevent a full lower denture from moving by using clips to hold the dentures steady.

In larger cases where there is not enough support for lips and cheeks if teeth were fixed directly to implants, implants can have bars fixed to them and a removable denture fits tightly on to the bar. There are many ways that implants can be used and this is where the diagnostic process is so important to the final result to give you what you want with any possible limitation having been explained.

CAN ANYONE HAVE IMPLANTS?

Virtually anyone can have dental implants. There are very few contraindications and age is not one of them. In general, if a person is healthy then they can be suitable for dental implants. Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption can reduce the rate of success. Dr. Tom Donnelly will assess you and advise if there are any problems.



HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE ENOUGH BONE?

It is not possible for you to assess your own situation. It is better for an experienced dentist to assess your mouth and link this to your requirements. The dentist will then suggest any special tests required to gain sufficient information to develop a treatment plan for your circumstances.

WHEN SHOULD THEY BE PLACED?

In an ideal world, implants would be placed whenever teeth were removed. This is simply not practical in the vast majority of cases. It is still better for implants to be placed, at the dentist's discretion within three months of extraction to maximise the bone quantity. This does not mean that people who have lost their teeth many years ago cannot have implants; it just means that there is more need for compromise when the bone and gum have reduced.

HOW MANY IMPLANTS DO I NEED?

The number of implants needed is dependent on the spaces you have and the treatment plan designed by your dentist to suit your requirements. As has been mentioned before each implant does not necessarily support just one tooth.

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WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

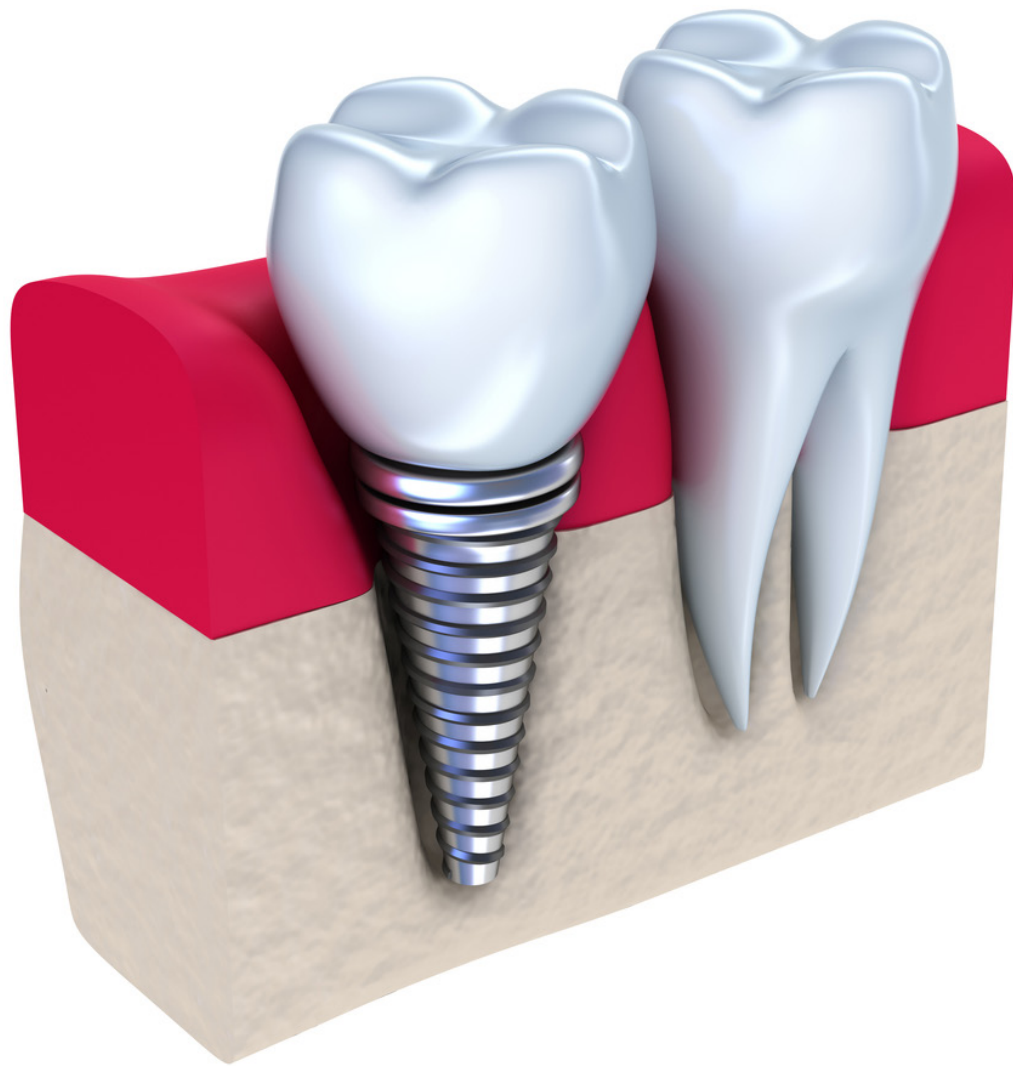
It is possible for any surgical procedure to have complications. Fortunately, mouths are incredibly forgiving. The main complications are swelling, bruising and infection around the time of implant placement. There is a rare possibility for an implant to fail to integrate. Beyond this, there are further possibilities of a form of gum disease affecting the implant. This goes by the name of peri-implantitis and is better prevented than trying to treat it. Each person who has an implant or implants placed has to be very careful with their oral hygiene and be especially patient and careful keeping around their implant clean and healthy. This reduces the risk of peri-implantitis massively.

WILL I HAVE TO GO WITHOUT TEETH?

The vast majority of situations do not require you to be without your teeth. There are circumstances where you will have to leave your teeth out. Your dentist will advise on the need for this.

HOW LONG WILL THEY LAST?

Dental implants can last a very long time. Dental literature suggests that if an implant can last through the first year then they can last 40 plus years. The tooth or teeth on top of the implant/s are unlikely to last as long as the implant itself. The crown or bridge on top of the implant on average may need replacing, depending on the circumstances, within 15-20 years. An over-denture or implant retained denture will have a much shorter life and will require much higher maintenance with replacement of some parts routinely.



WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE THERE?

For every space that you have in your mouth there are four realistic choices:

- Do nothing
- Use some form of denture be it in all plastic or with a metal base.
- Use adjacent teeth to support false teeth. This is called a bridge.
- Use some form of implant based tooth or teeth.

In specific circumstances there are some other alternatives but they are more unusual.

WHAT WILL IT COST?

The cost will be completely dependent on your circumstances. 41 South Bar will provide you an estimate for any proposed treatments.

HOW DO I LOOK AFTER IMPLANTS?

The care and maintenance of your implants is the most important part of the longevity of implant treatment. Dr. Tom Donnelly, with the help of the hygienist, will help guide you to maintain your implants and will establish a maintenance plan for you. This is as important for the health of all of your own teeth as it is for implants.

CONTACT

We hope that you have found this booklet informative. If you require any further information, would like to ask some questions or request another copy to refer to a friend or colleague, please contact the practice via the details below.

Kind regards,



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