

Implants

Tooth loss can have a far-reaching effect on your dental health and personal appearance. When you lose one or more teeth, your remaining teeth can drift out of position. This can lead to a change in the bite, the loss of additional teeth, decay and gum disease.

Dental implants can be an effective method to replace one tooth or several teeth. Each implant consists of a metal anchor that is inserted into the jawbone, and a protruding post, which is outfitted with an artificial tooth. Implants can also support a bridge, replace a partial denture or secure a fixed denture. The process requires surgery and may take up to a year to complete.

Replace a missing tooth



Support a bridge



Secure a removable denture

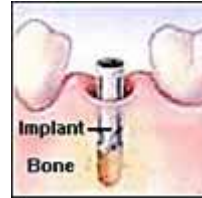


Secure a fixed denture



PROCEDURES

Several steps are usually necessary to place an implant. Depending on the type of implant, the steps may vary. The placement of a single-tooth endosteal implant is illustrated below:



The first step is completed under local anesthesia. A metal anchor, or artificial root is placed into the jawbone. Bone grows around the anchor. This takes about three to six months.

Next, a "healing cap" is placed when the implant is uncovered.



Then, the healing cap is removed and a metal post, or abutment, may be attached to the anchor.



When your gums and jawbone have healed, a crown (artificial tooth) is constructed, then cemented to the post. Fitting your new crown properly may take several appointments.



Brush and floss your implant twice daily, just like your natural teeth. Be sure to brush the back of the abutments and floss around the front, back and sides. Avoid chewing on hard objects or extremely sticky food. Proper oral hygiene will help keep your implants and your mouth healthy.