



YOUR COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO

Dental Implants

Dental Implants	3
Why replacing missing teeth is important	4
Important facts to consider with dental implants	5
Implant Surgery procedure	6
After care post-surgery	7
Possible side effects and complications of dental implants	8

This guide is for general information only and not to be used as a substitute for advice from your surgeon.

Your oral and maxillofacial surgeon will be able to assess you individually and will recommend the treatment, which is the most appropriate for you.

Dental Implants

Dental implants are a common, long-term solution for missing teeth.

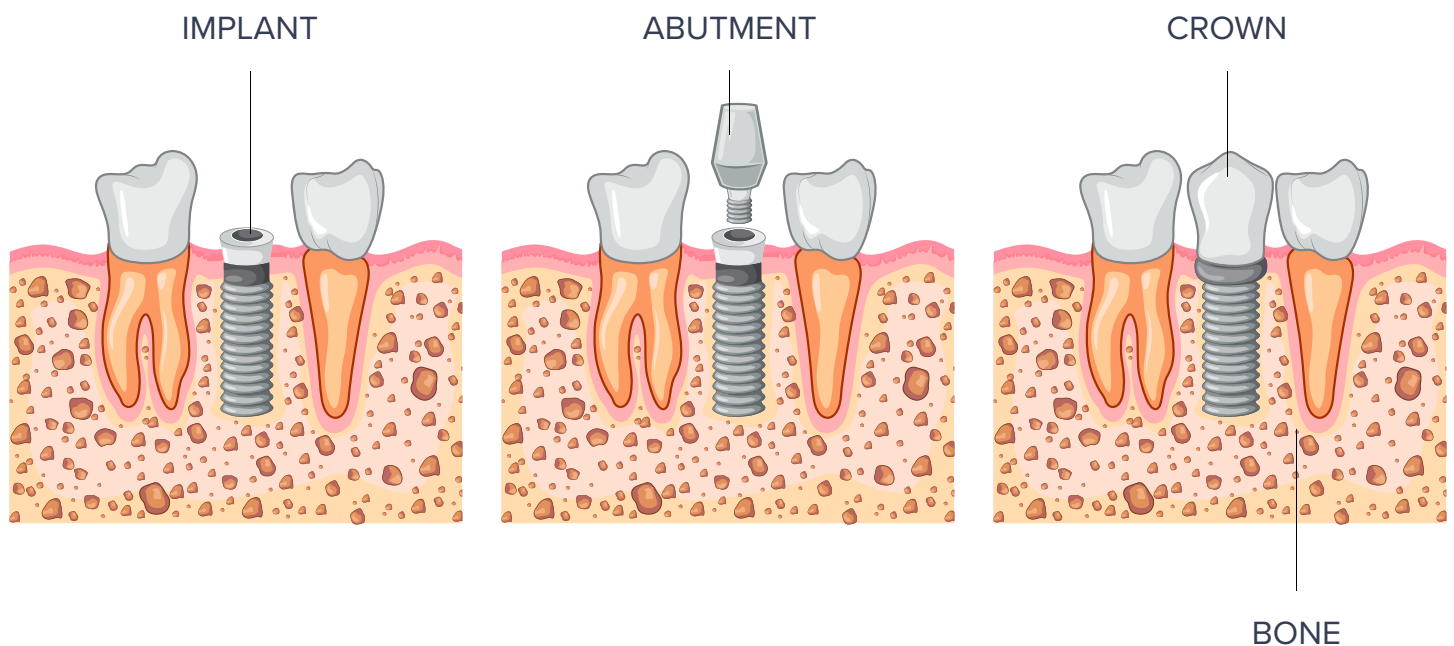
Dental implants can be used to replace one tooth, several teeth, or a full arch of teeth.

A dental implant is a bio-compatible titanium post which looks like a small screw. It is placed into the jawbone and once healed becomes fused (osseointegrated) with the jawbone.

After the implant has healed and fused with the bone (usually over a period of 3-6 months) an abutment is then used to connect the implant to the prosthesis.

The prosthesis is an artificial tooth, which is usually a crown for a single tooth, or a bridge for several missing teeth.

Millions of people have successfully replaced missing teeth with dental implants, as an alternative to full or partial dentures. Dental implants offer a comfortable and natural looking solution for missing teeth.



Why replacing missing teeth is important

A missing tooth can lead to a variety of problems with your oral health. Problems with a missing tooth include:

- Adjacent teeth shifting, tilting or overerupting
- Difficulty chewing
- Change in facial appearance

Why dental implants are useful

Dental implants offer a number of benefits compared to traditional full or partial dentures. They offer a more effective, long term solution for missing teeth. Other benefits of implants include:

- They feel and look like a natural tooth.
- They are more convenient, comfortable and more aesthetically pleasing than full or partial dentures.
- You are able to eat certain foods that you may not have been able to eat without all your teeth.
- Dental implants do not require the use of distasteful and messy adhesives.
- Dental implants can help maintain your bone structure and support your facial tissues.



Important facts to consider with dental implants

As the insertion of dental implants is a surgical procedure, the surgeon may have some questions about your dental and medical history, as certain health conditions and medications may interfere with surgery, anaesthesia and after care. This information will allow for your surgeon to provide the best possible treatment for you.



Health conditions:

You will need to tell your surgeon if you have any health conditions. This is important information as it may impact upon both your fitness for anaesthesia as well as the success rate of the implant surgery.



Medicines:

If you are currently taking medication or have taken medication recently your surgeon will need to know. This includes oral contraceptives, osteoporosis medications, blood thinners and heart medications, it also includes non-prescription and herbal medications.



Smoking:

Your surgeon may decline treatment if you fail to stop smoking as this increases the risk of failure in the bonding between the implant and the jaw bone. To improve chances of success you will need to not smoke.

Implant Surgery procedure

Anaesthesia

Treatment may be performed under a local or general anaesthetic depending on the complexity of the procedure. Both anaesthesia methods are safe and effective.

Local anaesthetic is often recommended if only a few implants need to be inserted.

General anaesthetic may be recommended if you need multiple implants inserted into the lower jaw, upper jaw or both. It may also be recommended if bone grafting is needed.

The procedure

Implant

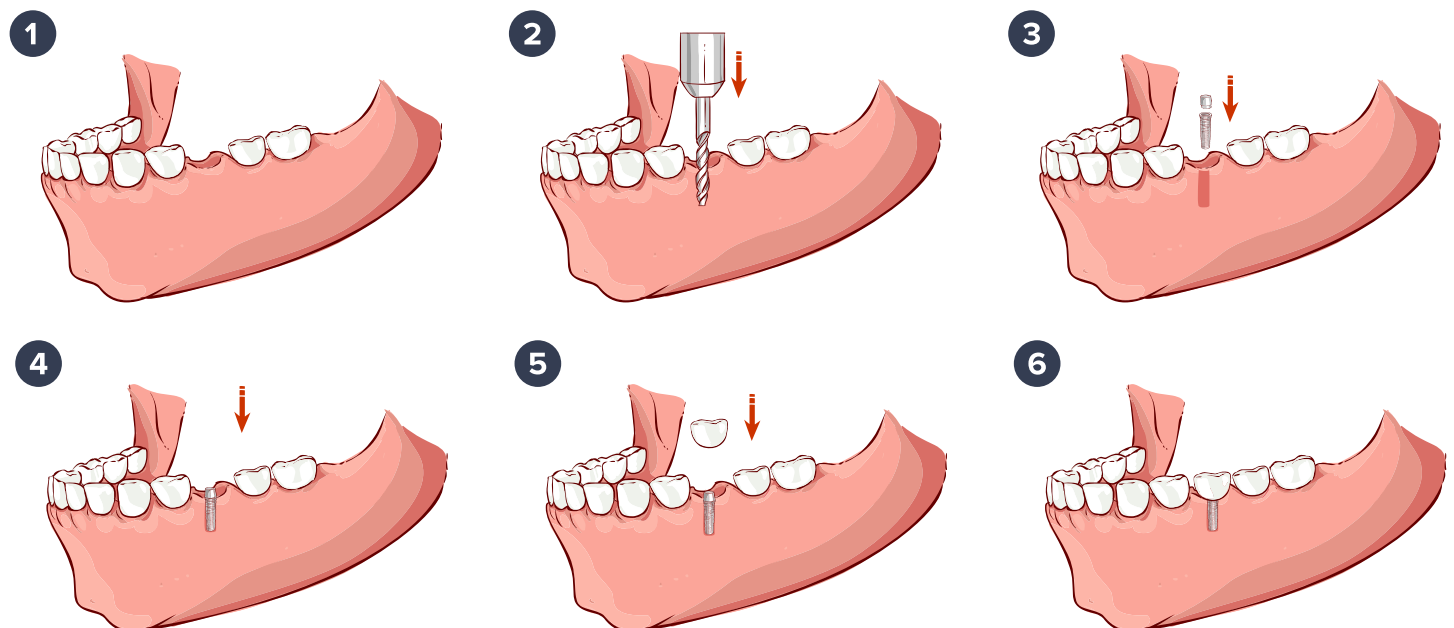
Firstly, your surgeon will make an incision in the gum where the implant is going to be inserted.

The number of implants that are inserted will depend on how many teeth being replaced. For example, one implant will usually be used to replace one tooth. If several or all of the teeth are being replaced, a number of implants will be used.

Once the implant has been inserted a healing cap is placed and, the incision is closed with dissolvable stitches.

Prosthesis

Once healing has taken place, your surgeon will test to see if the implants have fused with the bone. If the implant fusion has been successful, your surgeon will refer you back to your dentist or prosthodontist to attach the tooth or teeth.



After care post-surgery

If you have had treatment under general anaesthesia, a family member or friend must take you home as it is not recommended to drive after surgery.

You will be given detailed post-op instructions to follow to obtain the most effective after care. You may also be prescribed with painkillers or antibiotics.

At home:

After surgery, it is important to let your body rest. It is recommended to take some time off work or usual duties. Do not drive or operate any heavy machinery as you may still be feeling the after effects of anaesthesia.

Drink a lot of fluids and eat soft foods such as soups, pureed foods and soft vegetables for the first few days.

Do not drink alcohol whilst taking painkillers or other medications.

Pain after surgery is different for each person. Normally the pain starts to decrease after the second day of rest. If you find the pain does not decrease gradually in the days after the surgery, tell your surgeon as further pain medication may be required.

Ice packs may reduce any swelling and pain.

Success Rate:

The success rate of dental implant treatment may be reduced by:

- Poor general health including diabetes, immunosuppression.
- Poor oral hygiene.
- Smoking.
- Radiotherapy to the jaws.
- Steroids and certain osteoporosis medications.

Implants have a high success rate and many remain in function for more than ten years and often longer.

For most people, every implant will bond properly and be successful, but for others only some implants will fuse correctly, a failed implant can often be successfully replaced.



Possible side effects and complications of dental implants

Despite the high level of care taken by your surgeon, as with all surgical procedures, there are potential complications and risks. The risks and complications will be discussed with you to make sure you fully understand and accept them before any treatment is carried out.

If you have a side effect due to the implant, contact your surgeon.

Pain and swelling:

Pain and swelling can last for several days after the surgery. The amount of pain and swelling you experience will depend on the complexity of the surgery and the number of implants inserted.

You might be given pain relief to reduce the pain. If the pain does not lessen in a week post-surgery, please contact your surgeon.

Loose prosthesis:

There is a chance the abutment that connects the prosthesis to the implant may become loose, if this occurs the screw in the abutment can be fixed, tightened or replaced.

Implant failure:

There is a risk of the implant not fusing with the jaw bone properly. If this happens, a new implant may need to be inserted once the bone has healed.

Crown fracture:

There is a chance the crown (prosthesis) can fracture or chip. This can be resolved by replacing the crown.

Infection:

An infection could occur locally around the implant or in a distant part of the body. An infection caused by surgery can be usually treated with antibiotics.

If the infection cannot be treated with antibiotics, the dental implant may have to be removed.

Gingivitis:

There is a chance of inflammation in the gums which is caused by poor oral hygiene, not usually by the implant itself. This inflammation can cause pain in some people.

Nerve injury:

In very rare cases implant placement can bruise or damage nerves. This can cause numbness, tingling or loss of feeling in the mouth or face. Nerves usually heal by themselves, resolving the numbness and tingling feeling. In rare cases the nerve does not heal and the numbness or altered sensation may be permanent.



Contact Us

(03) 9347 3788

omfs.com.au

admin@omfs.com.au

Level 5, 766 Elizabeth Street Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia