

Dental Implants

What you need to know



Implant Crowns

Implant Bridges

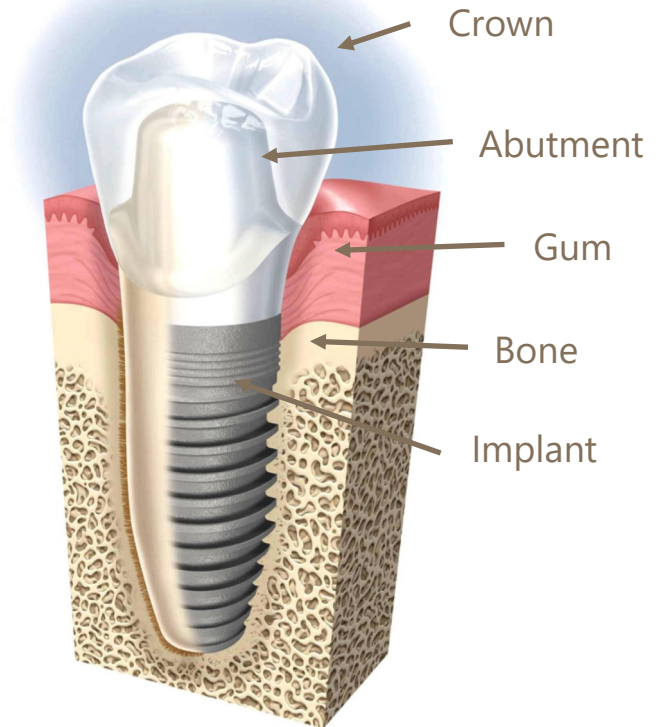
Implant Dentures

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H O R I Z O N
dental clinic

What are dental implants?

A dental implant is a replacement tooth root, made out of Titanium, which is surgically inserted into the jaw. Bone grows tightly around the implant to ensure it is secure. A variety of appliances such as crowns, bridges, and dentures can be attached to the implant.



What are the benefits of implants?

- Avoids the need to damage a healthy tooth
- Looks and feels like a normal tooth
- Preserves existing bone and gum tissue
- Eat without worry knowing that your appliance won't fall out
- Easy to clean
- Can restore larger spaces than conventional fixed bridges

Does it hurt?

We use local anaesthetic to minimise the discomfort during the initial placement. You won't feel any pain, and the most people tend to feel is vibration and pressure.

Removal of failing teeth

If your tooth/teeth requiring replacement haven't been removed yet, the first step will be to remove these failing teeth. This is usually performed under local anaesthetic (injections in the gum) to remove these painlessly.

It is sometimes possible to insert an implant straight after removing a tooth, but most of the time we will wait for your gum to heal before the initial surgery. Your implant dentist will advise you of how long to wait.

If you are worried about losing bone in the healing period, we can place some material in the socket to preserve the bone height and width. Your implant dentist will advise you if you need this and how much it will cost.

Temporary bridge/denture

If your gap is small and not easily seen, you may not require a temporary denture or bridge, but if you can see the gap then it is likely that you will need something to hide the space.

The options you might have are:

A removable plastic retainer that fits over your teeth

A removable plastic denture

A bridge cemented to a neighbouring tooth

Implant Placement

This is the longest appointment you will have - usually about 60-90 minutes.

Your implant(s) will be placed into your jawbone very carefully. To do this we usually make a cut in your gum, and drill some holes to make space for the implant. You may feel some pressure and vibration, but it is not painful.

Your implant dentist may attach a metal healing collar on the implant or may bury it and uncover it at a later date.

I've been told I need a bone graft

A bone graft is nothing to be worried about. We naturally lose bone when a tooth is removed, and sometimes there isn't quite enough bone to cover all of the implant.

Your implant dentist will pack a manufactured bone substitute on the implant. Sometimes this is made from animal product and it is important to let your implant dentist know if you have any objections to using animal products at least a week before the procedure so that an alternative material can be sourced.

The material naturally integrates with your own bone to provide a strong connection around the implant.

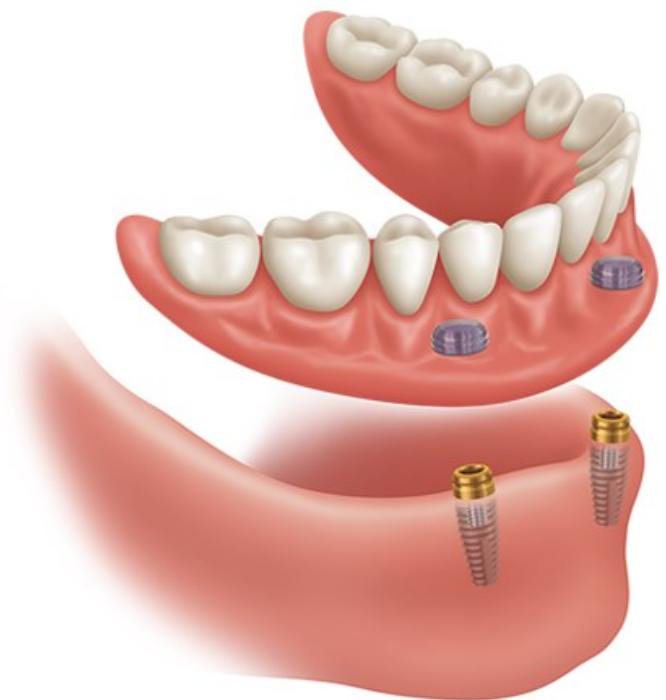
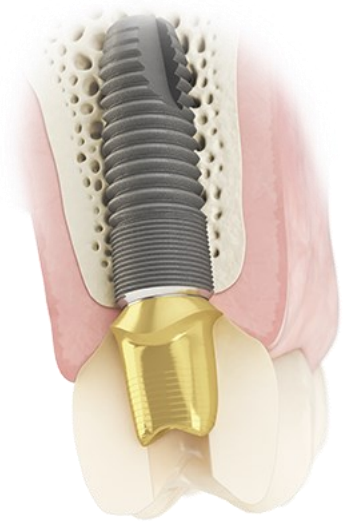


Implant Restoration

Once the bone has healed around the implant (at around 3 months) and the gum has healed around the healing collar, we will be able to take impressions of the implant.

Your impressions will be sent to a dental laboratory to construct your crown/bridge/denture and could take anything between 1-4 visits.

If your new tooth/teeth are particularly visible your implant dentist may have planned for you to have a temporary implant crown/bridge in order to modify the aesthetics before you commit to the final prosthesis. It is unusual for you to need a temporary prosthesis longer than 6 months.



Are implants successful?

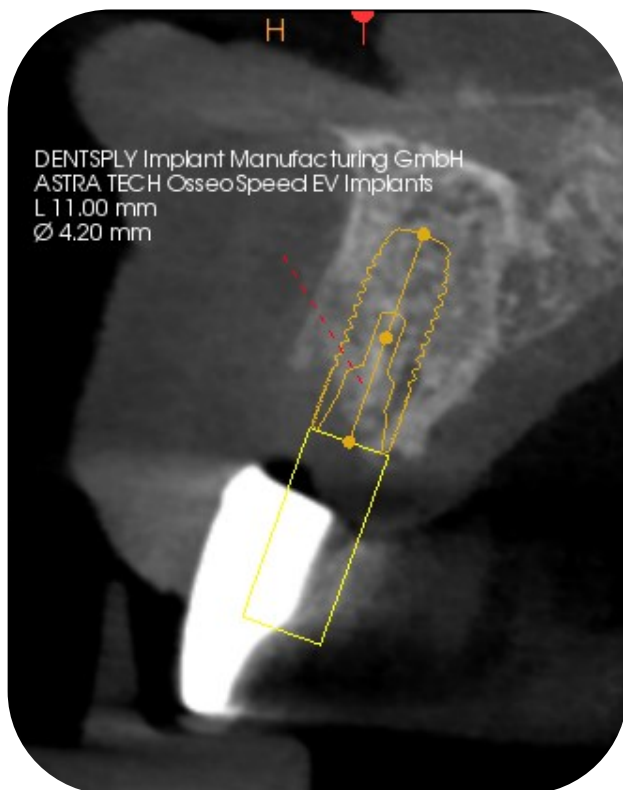
Implants generally have excellent success rates, and most people are suitable.

It is possible that an implant can fail to integrate (much like some transplants fail to 'take'). We would usually become aware of this during the healing phase after implant placement and should it happen, we would remove the implant and place another, several months later, once healing has occurred. In this event, the only extra cost would be for the materials and components used. The chance of this happening is 5-10%.

If the site is no longer suitable for a new dental implant. The treatment would be discontinued or the use of more pronounced bone grafting (for example grafting under a titanium barrier) may be required to render the site suitable.

Some medical complications (for example: heart disease, diabetes, bone

disorders), poor cleaning and maintenance of the areas during healing, smoking, poor diet, and alcohol consumption can contribute to treatment failure.



Previous gum disease on the natural teeth may be an indicator for bone loss around implants that are placed, we term this 'peri-implantitis' and for this reason, we urge you to maintain an exemplary standard of oral hygiene.

Surgical Risks

General risks:

You can expect some mild discomfort for about a week after the implant is placed, for which you will need to take pain relief. Swelling, and bruising is quite normal, and post operative bleeding is usually minimal. The risk of infection is very low and your implant dentist will advise whether antibiotics are indicated or not.

Site specific risks:

Upper central incisors:

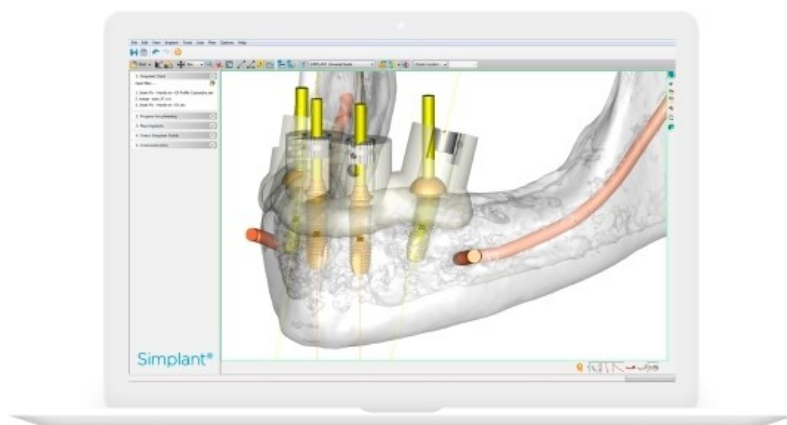
There is a small risk that implant treatment can damage a nerve behind these teeth. If this were to happen you may experience a numbness/tingling/painful sensation at the front of your palate, and we would expect you to inform the practice straight away.

Upper back premolars/molars:

Your sinuses can be quite large in these areas (especially if it has been a long time since your tooth has been removed). If an implant enters the sinus, it is usually of little consequence, but occasionally this can lead to an infection.

Lower premolars/molars:

There is an important nerve that runs through your jaw. Your surgery will be carefully planned to avoid this nerve, but in the event of prolonged numbness/tingling/painful sensation to the lip/chin/tongue, we would expect you to phone the practice straight away.



Ongoing Care and Maintenance

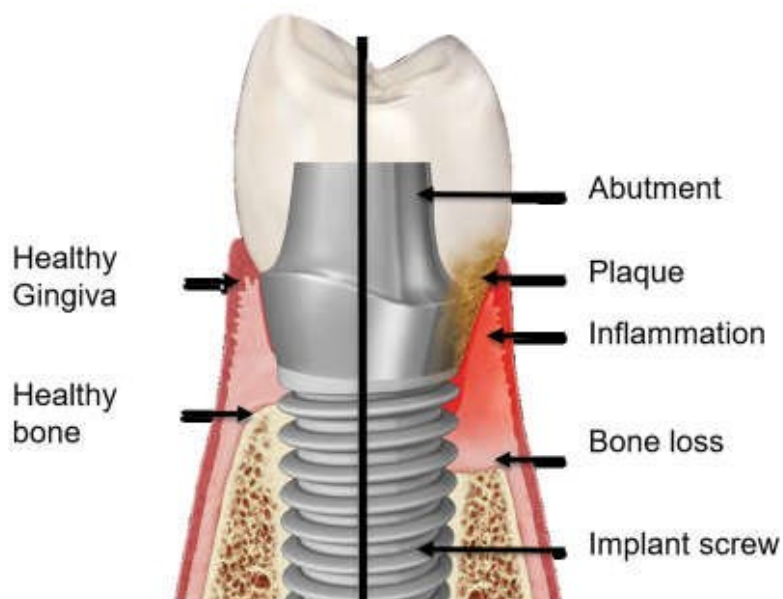
Once your implants and surrounding soft tissues are seen to be healthy and your new tooth is comfortable and correctly adjusted, it is the quality of your home care, and willingness to present for regular maintenance reviews that will most influence how long it will last.

When poorly cared for, implants develop a covering of build-up like that found on neglected natural teeth. Left untreated, these can lead to gum infection, bleeding, soreness and general discomfort, just as can occur around natural teeth.

It could probably be said that implants, much like natural teeth, will last for as long as you care for them. However, just as with other surgical implants (such as hip replacements) there is no lifetime guarantee. There is a chance of bone loss around dental implants, just as bone can be lost around natural teeth.

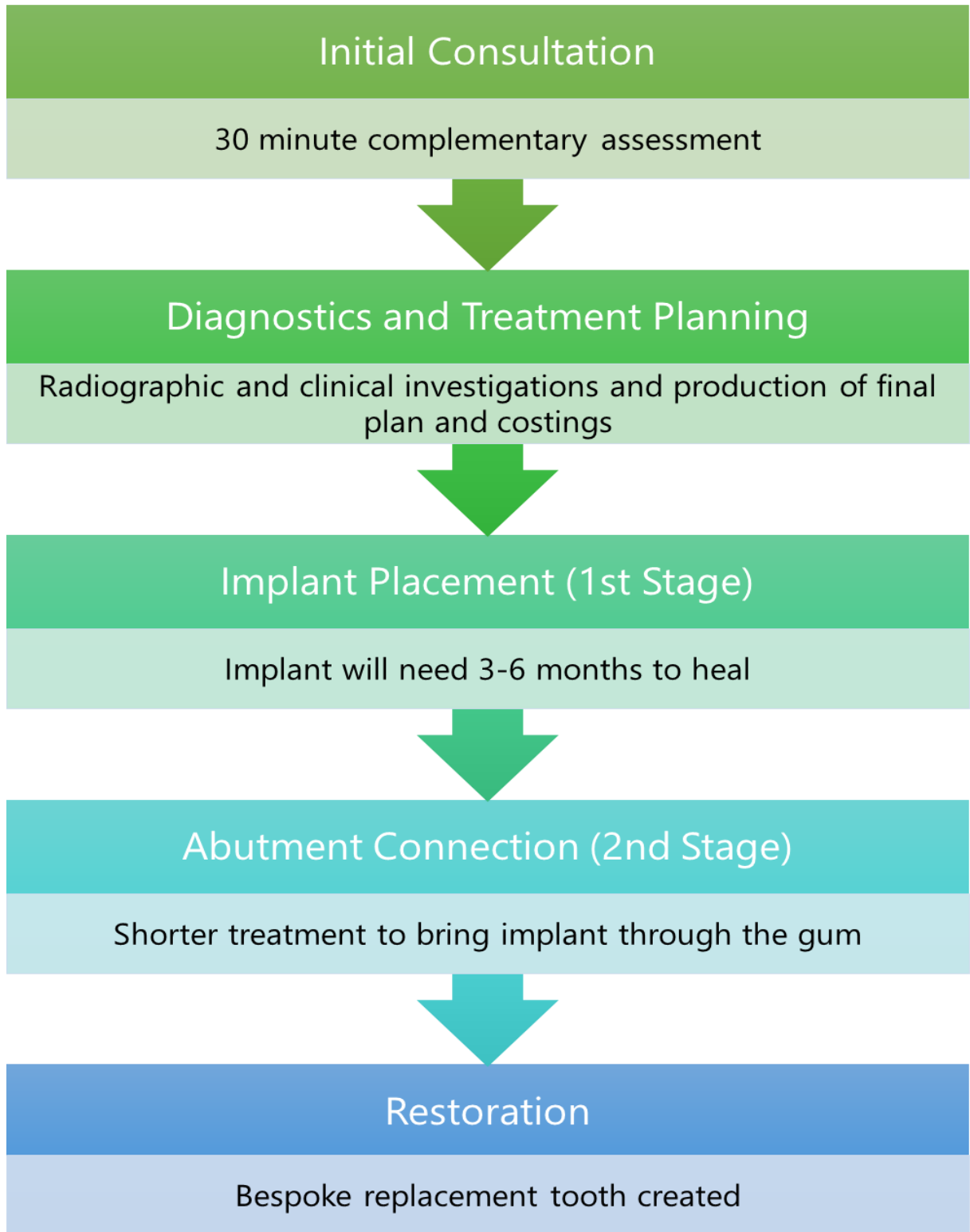
Regular reviews and hygiene maintenance are essential to maintain your implants, much in the same way a car would need a service or replacement parts over time.

With most forms of dental treatment, we suggest a 5-10-year lifespan for restorative work, this would be reasonable to assume for dental implants also.



Timeline:

example patient journey



Notes:

Implant Team

Dr Michael Hicks



Implant Dentist

Hollie Harle



Treatment Co-ordinator