



Your new implant(s)

Now that you have had your implant teeth fitted we hope that you are delighted with the final results and they will give you many years of security. There are however a number of things to remember about your replacement teeth with regard to how they feel and function, and how you should look after them to ensure that they remain healthy.

Most people find they get used to their new implant teeth very quickly, while others find it takes a few months until they feel completely confident to use them like normal teeth. You will need to look after your new implant crown or bridge, we highly recommend that you continue to see your dentist and hygienist routinely, to protect your investment. If cared for correctly your implants will give you many years of excellent service.

Once the tooth/teeth have been attached, what should I expect?

- When patients have their new implant teeth fitted, they occasionally bite their cheeks, lips or tongue when chewing for the first few weeks. Though annoying this is something that always settles down as you get used to your new teeth
- Unlike the teeth that they replace, implants are not alive and therefore do not have normal sensation. Patients sometimes describe this as the implants feeling slightly 'wooden'. Again, this is something that always settles down as you get used to your new teeth.
- The Implant teeth can either be cemented into place or screwed into place. Rarely, a cement retained implant crown/bridge may become loose and need re-cementing once again. Don't worry, it is not the implant itself but just the attached crown/bridge that is loose.
- Implants are the current gold standard for tooth replacement, we will always use the very best materials available for your treatments, but the daily grinding and chewing of hard and crunchy foods presents a challenging environment for your new implant teeth. Just like natural teeth, the teeth that are fitted onto your implants can occasionally chip or break. Though obviously frustrating for everyone involved, these can usually be repaired or replaced. Please note that there will be a charge for this if the implant teeth are more than 12 months old.
- Once your implants and surrounding soft tissues are seen to be healthy and your new teeth are comfortable and correctly adjusted, it is the quality of your home care, and willingness to come and see us or your dentist for regular maintenance reviews, that will most influence how long they last. You are in control of your final implant teeth day to day. Despite our efforts during planning and construction, if they are not well maintained at home, you can expect problems to occur just as they would with neglected natural teeth. It is your responsibility to maintain the implants and seek regular reviews for your implant teeth over the many years of good service that they will provide when properly cared for.
- When poorly cared for, implants develop a covering of deposits similar to 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. Remember, implants, much like natural teeth, will last for as long as you care for them. Well-maintained implants, placed into adequate bone, can be expected to last for many years.
- However, just as with other surgical implants such as hip replacements, there is no lifetime guarantee.
- Just as natural teeth can develop gum disease, leading to the gradual loss of the supporting bone over time, completed implants can develop a similar pattern of gradual bone loss if



they are not kept very carefully clean. It is essential that you keep your finished implants immaculately clean and you will be instructed on how to do this.

- Patients who have lost teeth through gum disease have been shown to be more susceptible to a similar condition around implants. Gum disease around an implant is called peri-implantitis. For these patients it is very important to have a programme of care with a hygienist and regular examinations with your own dentist to monitor home care and possible changes carefully.

Cleaning and maintaining your new implants

With your implant treatment it is vital that you still continue to see your dentist and hygienist regularly. You will need to ensure you maintain the health of your oral cavity, to protect your implant(s).

You should already be looking after your natural teeth by brushing twice a day for 2 minutes using a fluoride toothpaste. An electric toothbrush gives you the benefit of applying the right amount of pressure when brushing and a small soft/medium head will allow you to reach all the tooth surfaces. Dr Neil has shown you where your Implant(s) are placed. You need to clean around the implant crown and under any implant bridges every day, to remove bacteria, just as you would around a natural tooth. This can be done using floss and/or colour coded interdental brushes. We have provided an implant after care pack including –

- Pink TePe - to be used in between the implant crown and/or under bridges, to help remove any bacteria present. Your hygienist may recommend a different coloured TePe brush.
- Floss - to be used in between the implant crown and/or under bridges, to help remove any bacteria present.

We recommend seeing your regular hygienist in 4 weeks' time, so they can assess your cleaning regime with the new implant(s). It is essential to continue this cleaning routine for your implant(s). Even with Implant(s), you still have the same risk of gum disease, which can lead to the loss of your implant as well as your natural teeth. Gum disease around an implant is called peri-implantitis. Smoking is harmful to general health and will compromise the success of any dental treatment, including implant treatment. Smoking and poor oral hygiene are the main contributors to implant failure caused by Peri-implantitis.



What is Peri-implantitis?

Peri-implant mucosa (gum)

- Is the soft tissue around your implant?
- A healthy gum should be pink and form a tight cuff around your implant.
- There should be no bleeding when you brush your teeth.



Peri-implant mucositis (gum)

- Is inflammation of the soft tissue around your implant.
- This occurs primarily from poor oral hygiene leading to irritation from the enzymes and toxins of bacteria in mature plaque.
- The gum may become red, puffy and swollen, you will also notice bleeding when brushing.
- At this stage the condition can be reversed by implementing a better oral hygiene routine.



Peri-implantitis

- Is the destruction of the supporting tissues around the implant?
- This occurs by the enzymes and toxins of mature plaque gradually breaking down the supporting tissues.
- The gum will have receded and created a pocket between the implant.
- By this stage the condition is irreversible but if caught in the early stages, it can be maintained.



Finally, we trust that you will be delighted with your implant treatment and that you will recommend us to friends and family and give us positive feedback using our referral and testimonial cards.

Further information about implants and our services can be found on our website www.confident-dental-implants.co.uk.