



Dental Implant Guide

Dr Andy Tannahill B.D.S. (V.U. Manc)

Dr. Andy Tannahill

B.D.S. (V.U.Manc)

I qualified with a Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree from the University of Manchester in 1993. I have worked in Scarborough since 1994, and became a Partner at the practice soon afterwards. My Post graduate training has included Advanced Restorative dentistry, and Dental Implantology. I am currently enrolled on the Diploma in Implant Dentistry program at The Royal College of Surgeons in London, which is widely recognised as the Gold Standard for implant training in the United Kingdom. I aim to complete this diploma program in 2012/2013 and will be one of a select group of dentists to have achieved this highly regarded qualification (Dip Imp DentRCSEng).



If you have missing teeth

People lose teeth for a variety of reasons, these are; advancing gum disease, wear and tear due to ageing, accidents, failed root treatments or tooth decay.

These will leave gaps, which can sometimes seriously affect their smile, or cause problems as food is difficult to chew, and may put more stress on the digestive system.

Why should missing teeth be replaced?

After teeth are lost, the bone support underneath the gum will shrink. This will cause a lack of support, and may cause the facial appearance to collapse around the mouth, this can be extremely aging.

Placing dentures can fill the gaps, but as they constantly move in the mouth, they will accelerate this bone loss. The chewing forces cause slow resorption of the bone, causing the dentures to need relining or replacing. This bone loss may increase the need for other procedures required to place the implants successfully.



Who is suitable for dental implants?

Anyone who is in (or who has) good general health can usually have implants placed. However if you have a smoking or heavy drinking habit, then this will increase the problems with healing and may affect the long term viability of the treatment.

Options for replacing your missing teeth

Dentures

These are removable, and can be a relatively inexpensive way to restore missing teeth. However, as mentioned earlier they can cause accelerated shrinkage of bone, and due to their nature can cause gum disease and decay. As they may become mobile, some fixative may be needed to stop them dropping out, and cause a lack of confidence.



Conventional bridges

These traditionally were the alternative way to fill gaps in the mouth. However, they usually involve drilling natural tooth substance away before the bridge can be cemented onto the tooth. This will also increase the risk of needing a root treatment on the teeth which retain the bridge. Bridges cannot fill gaps which are too wide as the retaining teeth will not be strong enough to support them.



Options for replacing your missing teeth

Adhesive bridge

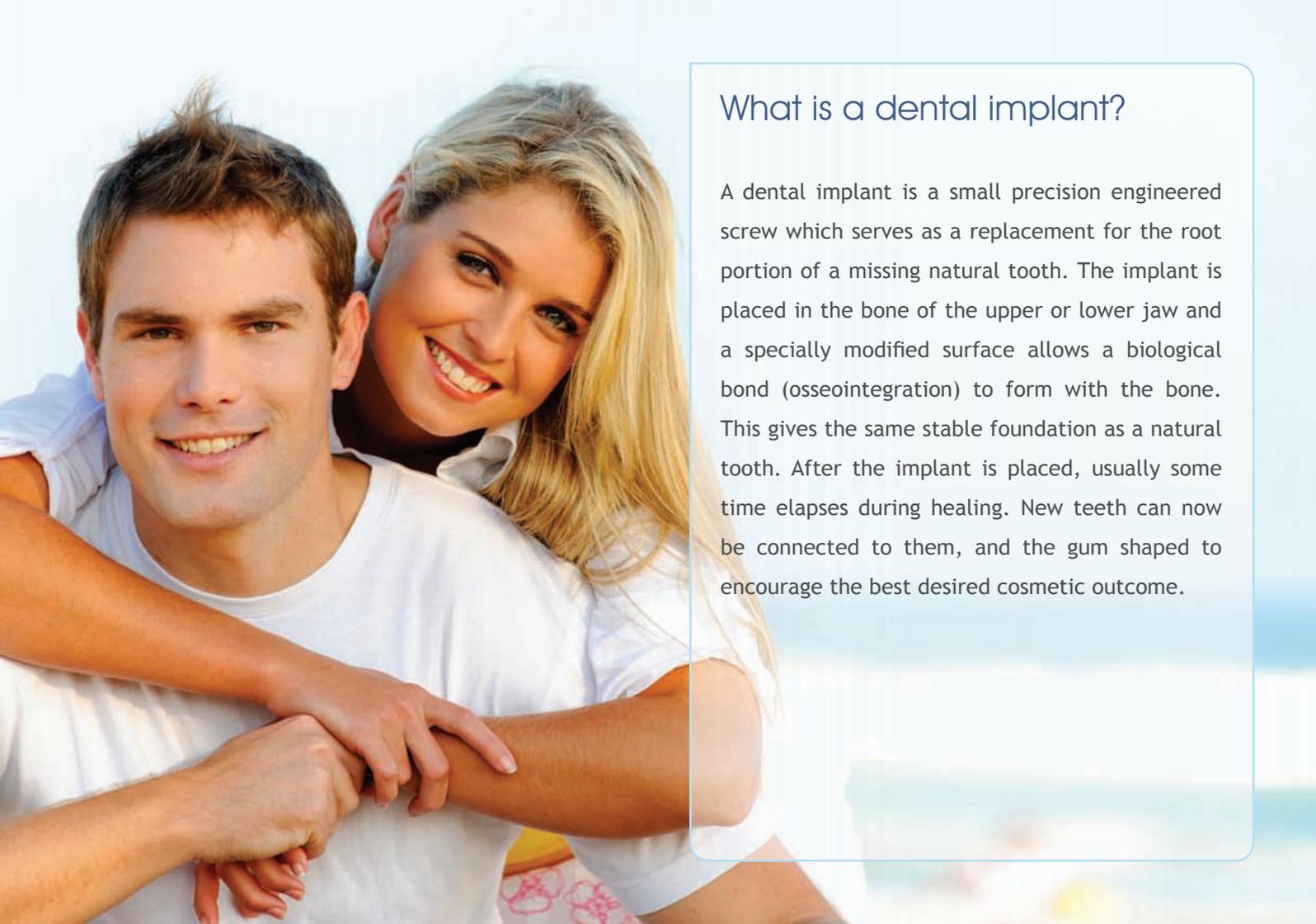
These can only be used for short periods or for areas in the mouth where low loading forces are imparted on them. However, although they do not need much drilling, they tend to be used as a temporary measure.

Dental implant

These will replace the missing tooth root, and stimulate the bone, so that any loss is minimal. They will stand-alone and do not need any support from the adjacent teeth. They are currently the best way to replace single, multiple or even a whole mouth of missing teeth.

Loose dentures can be “clipped” on to them to provide retention.

Regenerative techniques can also be used where implants cannot be placed due to inadequate bone.



What is a dental implant?

A dental implant is a small precision engineered screw which serves as a replacement for the root portion of a missing natural tooth. The implant is placed in the bone of the upper or lower jaw and a specially modified surface allows a biological bond (osseointegration) to form with the bone. This gives the same stable foundation as a natural tooth. After the implant is placed, usually some time elapses during healing. New teeth can now be connected to them, and the gum shaped to encourage the best desired cosmetic outcome.

How many teeth can be supported by Dental Implants?

Where the bone quality and volume is good, up to 2 implants can support 4 teeth.

Is placing implants painful?

Sedation is available for nervous patients. Placing implants requires a small operation. This is carried out under local anaesthetic. The placement is therefore painless. After the operation some patients do experience minor discomfort. Pre and post operative medication is given to aid a more comfortable recovery. Most discomfort is due to stitches which are removed 1 week later.

How long will it take?

Planning the treatment is the most crucial stage. Planning stages take around 2-3 weeks, and includes a case presentation where I will discuss every aspect of your treatment at length before beginning. You are welcome to bring a family member or friend along. Implant treatment can vary from 4-6 months up to about 2 years depending on complexity.

Will I have gaps during treatment?

Proper planning allows for the provision of a denture or a removable bridge, so that patients will be able to function normally. After surgery however there may be discomfort, when wearing a denture. It is sometimes necessary to leave an area with newly placed implants free from loading.

Is implant treatment expensive

Implant treatment can be a significant investment, but it is an investment in yourself and your quality of life.

All costs are clearly set out, and instalments can be used as a way of making the treatment more affordable. In this way we can cater for different budgets.



Stages of treatment

Each patient has an initial consultation appointment. Special tests eg radiographs, impressions etc are taken. Discussion then takes place, which is specific to each person, and a treatment proposal drawn up. You will be given a written letter, highlighting your current situation, and alternatives to implant treatment. You will also be given a report on the anticipated treatment stages, and length of treatment time, along with the likely costs.

Further discussions are held and any concerns are alleviated. Clinical pictures are taken and models used in conjunction with the laboratory to show what the final predictable outcome may be.

Stage 1

The earlier diagnostic tests help us to choose the desired length and shape of implant. The implant can then be placed to provide the best aesthetic and functional outcome. It sometimes has a tooth connected to it, or is covered over and the bone allowed to grow around it (osseointegration).

Stage 2

The implant is then uncovered after a period of time, and a connection (abutment) may be joined to it, if not already. Impressions can be taken to send the information to the Laboratory. Transitional restorations are now used to encourage the gums to be shaped to as natural a shape as possible.

Final stages

A number of visits take place:

1. Impressions.
2. Choosing the best shade, and recording the bite.
3. Try in of the porcelain to ensure best fitment.
4. Final fitting of the restoration.

During treatment follow up appointments take place at each stage. Dialogue and clinical pictures are taken at each stage, so that any concerns can be alleviated.

Everyone is different, and a customized treatment plan, which is unique to the individual is drawn up. This may be altered as circumstances can change throughout the course of the treatment.

Single Teeth

Sometimes an implant can be placed immediately, but otherwise we wait until the socket has healed. After the implant has healed for a few months, it is then uncovered whilst a connector (abutment) is joined to it. Finally a custom made crown is connected to it, whilst ensuring that the best possible aesthetic outcome is produced. In certain circumstances an immediate implant can be placed after extraction, and a new tooth connected to it. This can only be done in certain circumstances and a number of factors are involved, one of which is the absence of infection.



Replacing a missing tooth: crown on implant

Replacing multiple missing teeth

An implant is not needed to replace every missing tooth, and in some circumstances they can be splinted together to fill multiple gaps.

The bone in the Upper Jaw is less dense, and generally needs more implants to support fixed bridgework or a removable denture. At least 8-10 implants would support the final prosthesis, to ensure a predictable and stable outcome.



Implant retained Titanium bar secures a removable bridge

The Lower Jaw generally would need 6-8 implants to replace a whole arch of missing teeth, with a fixed bridge. Alternatively, 4 or even 2 implants can be used and these will be adequate to support a removable denture. Generally the more implants, which are placed, the more natural the teeth will look. In certain circumstances many teeth can be connected to dental implants on the same day of surgery. This can only be done after careful planning, and is not suitable for every patient. Your old diseased teeth can be extracted and new teeth connected at the same appointment.



A 3 x tooth bridge retained with 2 x implants

Brief summary of stages for Dental implant treatment.

1. Initial consultation appointment will include diagnosis and treatment planning. This will involve looking at your whole mouth, and may include clinical pictures, radiographs and some study casts. A written assessment is then produced for you, when you will then be asked to come for a second appointment, where this is discussed in more detail.
2. After the implant(s) are placed they are allowed to heal from 8 weeks to 6 months. Sometimes the teeth are connected onto them at this visit. There will be follow up appointments to remove sutures and check on progress.
3. The implants have healed and now they are uncovered and transitional restorations or a denture may be connected to them. This allows me to assess the aesthetics and allows the gums time to mature before the final restorations are fitted onto them. It also allows me time to check that the teeth fit and move in harmony to alleviate any overloading or interferences between them.
4. The final new teeth are fitted 3-9 months after placement of the implants.
5. Regular checkup appointments and oral hygiene ensure that your whole mouth will remain healthy.

Testimonials

Having been very nervous during the first consultation, I found reassurance that Dr Tannahill was up to date with all the latest research and techniques involved during my implant treatment. I have now been able to throw away the denture I have been wearing for the past year, and can talk and eat with confidence without having to use denture fixative.

Mrs L

Being very nervous I was reassured by being kept fully informed of all the aspects of the procedure, and constantly reassured that the treatment was routine. Good luck in your Implant Diploma at the Royal College of Surgeons!

Mr B. H.

Nobody knows these are implants. They look and feel so like my own teeth. I feel confident again - money well spent. Thank you so much Andy.

Mrs J.P.

Valley Bridge Dental Practice, 4 Cambridge Terrace, Scarborough YO11 2LQ
Tel: 01723 362020 - Email: info@andytannahill.co.uk - Website: www.andytannahill.co.uk

I also work at: The Smile Rooms, 13 Saville Street, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 7LL
Tel: 01653 692230 - Website: www.thesmilerooms.co.uk