



**SOUTHERN  
IMPLANTS**  
PATIENT **INFORMATION**

Don't let missing teeth  
limit your life



## Don't let missing teeth limit your life

If you are missing any of your natural teeth, implant dentistry could provide you with teeth that almost look and feel like your very own. The aim of implants is to improve your health, chewing function and aesthetic appearance.

**Dental implants help preserve facial bone, whereas conventional dentures or alternatives, usually lead to accelerated bone loss and facial changes associated with ageing.**



## What are Dental Implants ?

Dental Implants are Titanium screws with specially treated surfaces. They are placed (implanted) into your jawbone to function in a similar way to a natural tooth root. Your bone grows onto the implants in a process called **OSSEOINTEGRATION**. If osseointegration is not established or lost, the implant will become loose and fail.

## Am I suitable for Dental Implants ?

Most people who are in good general health are good candidates for dental implants. X-rays, and sometimes CT scans, will be needed to see if you have sufficient quality and quantity of bone.

What often happens where there are missing teeth, is that the jawbone begins to shrink. This is common with denture wearers, and the ridge which is important for holding the denture, gradually disappears, affecting the fit of the denture.

Implants reduce the break down of bone in the toothless part, as they transmit force / energy onto the bone when chewing, which stimulates bone maintenance.

The sooner you decide to have the implants placed, the less will be the permanent loss of bone and the easier it is for the dentist to achieve a good aesthetic result.

## **Are Implants Safe and how long do they last ?**

Implants generally have high success rates. The long term success mostly depends on how well they are cleaned and maintained.

### **Does it hurt ?**

A small procedure will be necessary. It is usually possible to place implants in a dentist's rooms. In some cases a general anaesthetic is preferable, and this will require a visit to a clinic or hospital. Any discomfort that may be experienced after surgery can be controlled with conventional painkillers.



### **Is the treatment expensive ?**

An accurate cost estimate can be obtained from your dentist or dental specialist. This is usually given in the form of a quotation. It is also advisable to check with your medical-aid to find out how much of the cost they will cover.

The components chosen will depend on the type of treatment needed. In addition to component costs, there will be professional fees and there may be hospitalisation and medicine costs.



## How is the treatment obtained ?

Implant treatment is a unique form of dentistry. Not all dentists are able to provide implant treatment. For this reason, your dentist might refer you to a specialist for part or all of the implant treatment.

### Patient Referral Notes

Referred to: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact No: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_



smile  
confidently

## Replacing a single tooth

There are several options for replacing a missing tooth. A removable denture can be worn. Depending on the condition of the two adjacent teeth, they could be prepared to carry a bridge. The bridge would be cemented onto the adjacent teeth, which replaces the lost tooth.



Alternatively, an implant could be placed into the gap left by the missing tooth and a crown or cap can be attached to the implant.

The implant is similar in shape and size to a natural root. Once the implant has integrated, a mould is taken of your mouth, so that a tooth can be manufactured to fit on top of the implant. After approximately a week or two, the final tooth or crown, can be attached to the implant.

The result is a natural looking crown that will have great long-term success, if looked after properly.

## Replacing two or more missing teeth

When two or more teeth are missing, a removable plastic or metal denture can be worn.

Depending on the condition of the adjacent teeth and their distribution, these can be prepared to carry a bridge. The bridge would be cemented onto the teeth and will fill the gap.

When wearing a denture or a fixed bridge, the bone at the site of the missing teeth continues to shrink, requiring them to be re-made after a number of years. Alternatively implants can be placed into the gap.

A bridge that rests on two or more implants, **does not damage any healthy teeth**, and helps **prevent the shrinkage of the bone**. The number of implants needed, would be dependent on the number of missing teeth and is determined by your dentist.



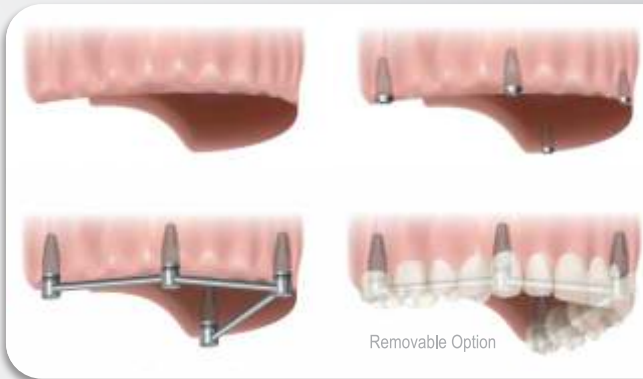
Once the implants have intergrated, a mould would be taken of your mouth by your dentist, to enable a dental technician to manufacture a bridge. This bridge is then secured onto the implants using screws, or cement, thus replacing the missing teeth.

Should there ever be a repair needed, such as a crack or chip, the crown part may be removed by your dentist and sent to a Dental Technician for repair.

## Replacement when all teeth are missing

There are three options available when all teeth are missing in either the upper or lower jaw.

The first being a standard removable denture, which rests on the remaining gums in your mouth.



The second **removable option** allows a full denture to be manufactured which rests on a number of implants in your mouth. Small attachments are placed on top of the implants, with corresponding clips embedded in the denture. When the denture is placed into your mouth, it 'clips' onto the implants, and is held very firmly in place. It is far more stable than a normal denture and will not move around in the mouth. In order to remove the denture, it can easily be unclipped with your fingers by lifting the denture. Due to the increased stability, the palate area of an upper jaw denture can usually be removed, improving taste and palatal sensations.

In the case of the **fixed option**, a full arch bridge is permanently secured to implants using screws. Four or more implants are usually used, and only your dentist can remove the fixed prostheses if necessary. As with all implants, impeccable oral hygiene is needed.



## **What is a sinus lift / bone graft?**

In certain cases where the natural teeth have been missing for a long time, the natural bone may have shrunk excessively, to the point that implants cannot be placed in the normal way.

In order to place the implants, a sinus lift or bone graft would be necessary. Here a bone product is added to the area where the implants are to be placed, thickening the bone to provide sufficient bone support for the implants.

### **Sinus lift (upper jaw)**

This procedure has become very common practice. It is done by gently lifting the membrane that lines the inside of your sinus, away from the sinus floor, and placing bone into this space, which thickens the upper jaw bone.

The graft is left for about 6 months to develop its own blood supply and turn into natural bone. After this healing period, the dental implants can be placed provided there are no complications.

The extent of bone loss, the location of the bone defect and the condition of the overlying soft tissues will influence the material and technique of choice. Your surgeon will discuss the options with you .



## Oral hygiene

Patients who have implants must commit themselves to a lifetime of stringent oral hygiene. This is to ensure that the gingival tissues surrounding the implant remain healthy, with no plaque accumulating around the implants, the prosthetic parts attached to them and around the teeth.

This involves the effective control and removal of food debris, negative bacteria, and their by-products in the mouth. If not removed, the by-products of the bacteria cause an inflammation of the gum and can proceed to destroy the bone around the implant. This is called gingivitis and peri-implantitis, and is usually indicated by bleeding gums.

A mouth free of plaque is not only beneficial to your oral environment, but also to your body. Studies have proven that dental bacteria can have a negative effect on your overall health.

## Hygiene protocol

Brush at least twice a day; after breakfast and before going to bed at night, using an electric or manual toothbrush. Apply the appropriate interdental tools daily, using floss, an interdental brush and / or a single tufted brush. An oral irrigator is also extremely effective.



quality  
of life

## Tools available to maintain good home care

- \* Electric toothbrush
- \* Manual toothbrush
- \* Superfloss / X-Floss light
- \* Flossthreader
- \* Interdental brush
- \* Single Tufted Brush
- \* Oral irrigator
- \* Gauze strips

### Brushing

#### **Manual Toothbrush**

Using a manual toothbrush, position the brush head on the last tooth on the side of the cheek at a 45° angle. Apply a vibratory circular motion for ten counts. Move onto the next tooth and repeat the same procedure, moving along the arch until all teeth have been brushed. Brush all surfaces of your teeth/prosthesis in this way, and don't forget to also brush the surface of the tongue.

#### **Electric Toothbrush**

An electric toothbrush can be used **once the implants are fully integrated**. Position the head of the toothbrush on the last tooth in your arch. Angulate it towards the back, middle and front of the tooth 3-4 times per tooth repeatedly, following the curvature of the tooth. Move on to the next tooth and repeat the same procedure. Brush all surfaces of your teeth/prosthesis in this way, and don't forget to also brush the surface of the tongue.

### Interdental Cleaning

#### **Interdental brush**

Insert the little brush between the base of the prosthesis and the gum. Move it gently to and fro and from side to side (implant to implant). Enter from the lip side and then repeat the same procedure from the palatal and/or tongue side.

#### **Oral Irrigator**

With this device water is squirted under high pressure out of a nozzle. By guiding the tip between the base of the prosthesis and the gum, debris and some of the plaque is flushed away. The water jet stimulates the blood flow to the gum, making it more resistant to inflammation.

## Flossing

Familiarize yourself with the position of your implants in relation to your prosthesis. It is crucial that the base of the prosthesis and the gum is kept free of plaque. X-Floss, Superfloss or G.U.M Implant floss has a rigid end that is used to thread the floss between the base of the prosthesis and the gum. Manoeuvre the floss in a see-saw motion, utilizing the fluffy part to clean off any plaque. Ensure to clean between every implant. There is often an extension at the end of a full arch prosthesis; hook the floss over the end and pull it forward till it stops at the next implant. If you battle to insert the tip of the floss, use a floss threader.



A gauze strip is used in the same manner in wider spaces.

## Mouthwash

If your surgeon prescribes an oral rinse for you, use as directed. Many commercially available mouthwashes contain alcohol, which tend to dry out the oral mucosa. For this reason, they should only be used for short periods of time. The proven and most effective way of removing plaque is by applying the correct brushing and flossing techniques.

You have made a considerable investment in acquiring your new set of implant supported teeth. If looked after in the recommended way, they will serve you for many years.

For more information on these and other hygiene tools, please visit:

**CURAPROX**

[www.curaprox.com](http://www.curaprox.com)

**iDontix**

[www.idontix.com](http://www.idontix.com)

Southern Implants has been expanding proven concepts in the implant dentistry field since 1987. Our wide product range includes some of the most unique, innovative products in the world.

Manufacturing facilities are situated in South Africa and the USA. In a recent survey of over 1300 dental implant systems worldwide, Southern Implants was placed in the select group of only 4 to be correctly substantiated by controlled clinical research.

We are driven by a passion to rehabilitate those patients in need of quality and cost effective prosthetic rehabilitation.



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