



# The Ultimate Guide to **Dental Implants**

# ■ Guide Contents



Introduction

Factors to Consider

Tooth Replacement Options

Dentures

Bridges

Implants

All-On-X Implants

Implant Procedure

Are Implants Worth the Investment?

Implant Pros and Cons

# ■ Introduction

When considering Implants, it's normal to be apprehensive. There are a lot of tooth replacement options out there, and dental implants stand out because of the high cost of treatment. Yet, with their relatively higher price tag, dental implants really do afford you much greater assurance and long-lasting quality. Your teeth will look, feel, and function the same way that your natural teeth always have. The surgical procedure for dental implants is easy to set up, and recovery times are minimal compared to most surgeries.

As you can probably guess, we are biased! But as dental professionals, we are bound to suggest the highest quality of care to repair and protect your mouth and we have real feedback from our patients that verify our recommendation again and again. If you are still unsure about which option is best for you after reading this guide, [schedule a consultation](#) for an in-depth analysis and personal recommendation to fit your lifestyle and expectations.

# ■ Factors to Consider

## 1. Function

Teeth are taken for granted until we have lost one or more. Some options, such as dental bridges and implants, provide a minimal difference in comparison to your natural teeth. However, there are differences between the two when it comes to things like taste and your eating experience. Dental implants offer the closest function to your normal teeth, allowing you to continue eating the same foods without inhibiting your overall senses or eating experience. Dental bridges offer a similar closeness to natural teeth, yet you may need to stay away from certain foods that could seriously damage the bridge. Dentures on the other hand, come with a whole list of foods to refrain from and may severely limit the functions of your mouth overall or need to be removed often in order to avoid damaging them.

## 2. Maintenance

Another factor to consider is overall maintenance. Dentures, for instance, require a specific and detailed care regimen. Because they are made from fragile materials, they require gentle care when removed from your mouth. Bridges and Dental Implants require far less maintenance overall. Dental implants for instance, are so similar to your natural teeth that the maintenance for this option is no different from your regular daily routine.

## 2. Health

One of the main issues with losing a tooth is the decay that it might cause in the jaw bone. Dentures (unless implanted) and bridges will not provide support within the jaw bone, and therefore may not protect you from jaw bone decay. This decay can cause your facial structure to change with time and also limit your options for further dental care or eventual implants.

# Tooth Replacement Options

Before we get into Dental Implants specifically, let's go over the different options patients have for replacing one or more of their teeth.



Each of these categories have a range of options, and there is often a bit of overlap. Let's go over all of them a bit before we dive into dental implants specifically.

1

DENTURES

# Dentures



If you have had teeth removed due to decay or gum disease, your dentist may suggest **temporary dentures**. Temporary dentures can diffuse pressure to your teeth, and provide a quick solution.

Conventional dentures are a removable device used to replace missing teeth. They may be either complete or partial:

- **Complete Dentures** are used to replace all teeth in the mouth. Complete dentures will restore a normal appearance and are the quickest solution to replace a full set of teeth.
- **Partial Dentures** are used to when a group of teeth are missing. Partial Dentures will fill the gap, and prevent other teeth from moving around.



There are also options to fix dentures to your mouth with either adhesives or more permanently with the use of implants. Implant retained dentures are what we refer to as “All-on-X” Implants, which we will discuss later, but there are also **Snap-On Dentures**, which are removable and can be snapped on and off as needed.

# Dentures

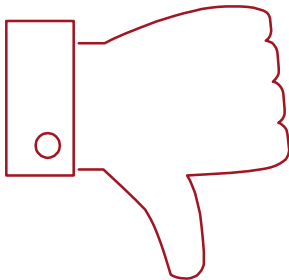
## Pros

- Fills the visual gap of a missing tooth
- Can provide an intermediary between the loss of a tooth and dental implants
- Dentures are less costly than implants or bridges
- Prevents bone loss from missing teeth

## Cons

- Dentures may easily become loose
- Dentures must be removed and cleaned carefully to avoid damage
- Limits ability to eat foods of choice and can prevent ability to fully taste
- May have to be replaced at regular intervals

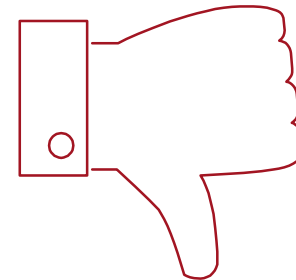
Comfort



Cost



Function & Maintenance





2

BRIDGES

# Bridges

Traditional dental bridges allow the gap of a missing tooth to be replaced with a crown, which is then supported by one or more of the adjacent teeth. Because they rely on a secure bond to the nearby teeth, the adjacent teeth are ground down and capped with crowns.

- **Tooth-Supported Fixed Bridges** are used as an alternative to implant options, and specifically when single teeth are missing.
- **Implant-Supported Fixed Bridges** are used to replace a sequence of missing teeth. In a row of four missing teeth, 3 may use implants, and support a middle tooth without having to use a fourth implant.



# Bridges

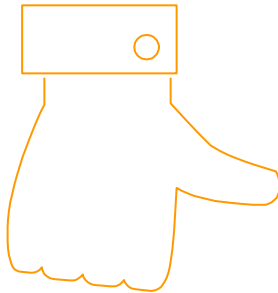
## Pros

- Bridges function similarly to normal teeth
- Bridges are quick and comparatively low-cost
- Bridges do not involve surgery
- Bridges can be replaced easily

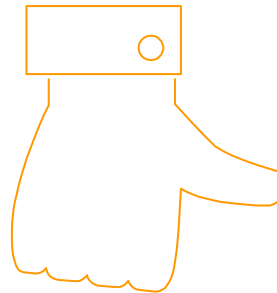
## Cons

- Tooth-supported fixed bridges may not prevent bone loss in the jaw due to a missing tooth.
- Teeth may be ground down in implementation, and therefore are more susceptible to decay and infection

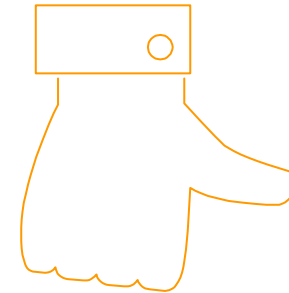
### Comfort



### Cost



### Function & Maintenance



3

**IMPLANTS**

# Dental Implants



Dental implants are generally considered the best solution for replacing either a single tooth or all of your teeth.

Dental implants consist of posts made of titanium and other materials that are compatible with and accepted by the human body. These posts are surgically placed in the jaw, and are capped with dental crowns that look identical to normal teeth.

- **Single Dental Implants** are used to replace a single tooth when one is lost to disease or decay. A single dental implant will fill the gap in your smile without damaging any of the nearby teeth.
- **Full Mouth Dental Implants** provide a more comfortable feeling and natural maintenance plan in comparison to complete dentures. Implants are placed where each of your original teeth were, and are custom-fit to the shape of your mouth.

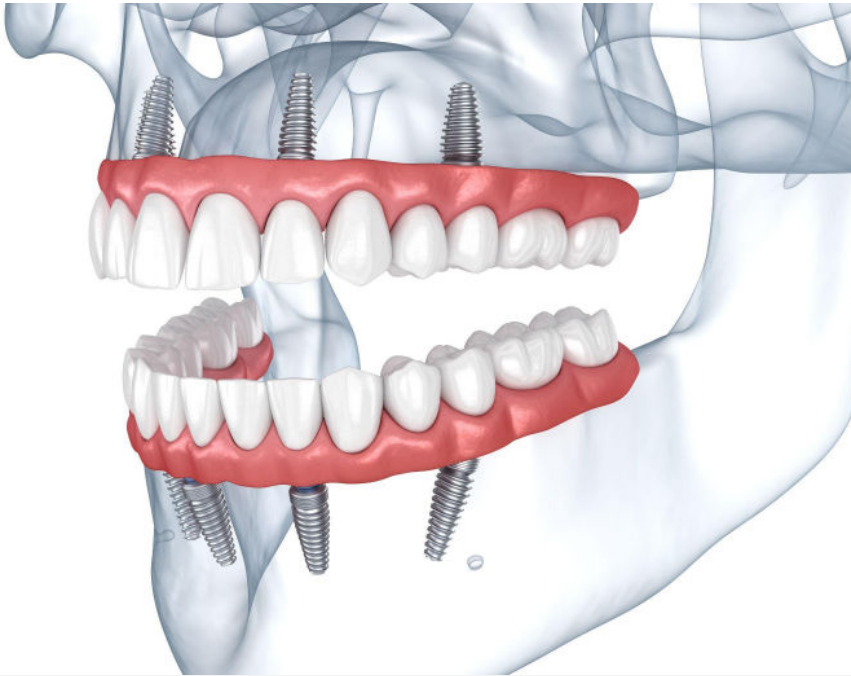


Depending on the amount of teeth you need replaced, an implant-supported bridge or denture may also be your ideal option. We'll go over All-On-X Procedures next.

# All-On-X Implants



While traditional dental implants are individual metal posts that are surgically implanted into the jawbone to support a single tooth or a bridge of teeth, all-on-X (typically all-on-4 or all-on-6) dental implants use a limited number of implants to support a full arch of replacement teeth.



Because there are fewer surgery sites in the mouth for all-on-x implants, the procedure and healing process are quicker and easier, and they come at a much lower price point than replacing each tooth surgically. Also, because of the way pressure is divided between the implants that are connected to the jaw bone, all-on-X implants still prevent jaw bone deterioration, maintaining the structure of your jaw and face shape.

# ■ Implant Procedure



Because dental implants rely on surgically implanted screws that permanently fix teeth to your mouth, there is a longer procedure compared to temporary dentures or dental bridges. You would likely go through the following steps to ensure a long-lasting permanent smile:

## **1** Initial Consultation

The first step in the process is to schedule an initial consultation with your dentist or orthodontist, and ask them about All-on-4 implants. During this consultation, the dentist will evaluate your oral health and determine if you are a good candidate for the procedure.



Schedule a Consultation Now 

## 2

## Treatment Planning

If you are a good candidate for All-on-4 dental implants, the dentist will create a customized treatment plan based on your specific needs and goals. There may be some preliminary treatments required to treat any signs of infection, gum disease, or tooth decay of existing teeth. This may also include taking X-rays and 3D images of your jawbone to determine the best placement of the implants.



## 3

## Implant Placement

The next stage of the process is placing the dental implants. This is typically done under local anesthesia or IV sedation to ensure you are comfortable during the procedure. The dentist will carefully place four implants into your jawbone at specific places that will provide the best support for the full arch.





## 4

### Temporary Teeth

After the implants are placed, the dentist will attach a set of temporary teeth to the implants. These temporary teeth will allow you to eat and speak normally while your jawbone heals and the implants fuse with the bone. This process is called osseointegration, and it will help to prevent bone loss. Once the titanium implants have fused with the jawbone, they will work similarly to regular teeth with tooth roots. This will keep the jaw bone engaged and prevent bone loss, which dentures will not.



## 5

### Final Teeth

Once your jawbone has fully healed and the implants have fused with the bone, your dentist will replace the temporary teeth with a set of permanent teeth that are custom-made to match the shape, size, and color of your natural teeth. These teeth may be made from porcelain, metal alloy infused porcelain or another durable material and will function just like your original teeth.

# Dental Implants

## Pros

- Implants are durable and last a lifetime
- Implants' function and maintenance needs are identical to your natural teeth
- Implants will likely have a positive effect on your bone growth once installed

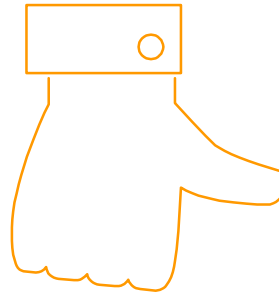
## Cons

- Implants require a surgical procedure
- Dental implants are the most expensive solution for tooth replacement

### Comfort



### Cost



### Function & Maintenance



# Are Implants Worth the Investment?



Compared to the different options available for replacing lost teeth, dental implants are the most costly. They also require a lengthy procedure compared to replacement options. Yet, this option is the most recommended and highly rated for several reasons. Here's several reasons why our patients love their dental implants to help you weigh the costs to benefits:

## 1. A Beautiful Smile

For many people, especially those who are missing visible teeth, this is the number one reason dental implants are worth the investment. Dental implants are made to fit you. They are straight, white, perfectly sized and perfectly aligned to your natural teeth. Whether you are looking for a complete set of dental implants to replace dentures or you want to replace a few missing teeth, dental implants will fit seamlessly into your smile.

## 2. Less Pain

Exposed gums often cause pain and difficulty chewing. If you have trouble enjoying your favorite foods and you often have pain in your gums where your teeth are missing, dental implants are worth the investment just to alleviate the pain.

### **3. No Frustration**

Dentures and partials inevitably cause some frustration. It may be difficult to get your dentures or partials to stay in place, or they may come loose at embarrassing moments. They may be hard to keep clean and cause bad breath. Dental implants look and feel just like your normal teeth, with no paste or denture cleansers required, so there's no more frustration.

### **4. Less Maintenance**

Between dental paste, cleaning tablets, regular brushing, re-fitting and eventual replacements, dentures require a lot of upkeep to keep them clean and looking presentable. This may add an hour or more to your nightly or morning routine. Dental implants are worth the investment just by reducing the amount of time and money you spend on upkeep. Simply brush and floss your dental implants just like regular teeth and that's it!

### **5. Dental Implants are a Long-term Solution**

Dentures and partials wear down over time. As they wear out, they won't fit as well, they'll look less attractive, and they'll feel uncomfortable. Dental implants, however, are made to last a lifetime. The one-time dental implant investment is worth it in the long run; it'll save you time and money spent on denture upkeep and replacements.

### **6. Correct Difficulties With Speech**

Depending on where you are missing teeth, it may be difficult to pronounce certain words. This can make you self-conscious about speaking, and it can undermine your confidence. Dentures may also interfere with your speech patterns when they are in. Dental implants will replace your missing teeth with the most natural match to your original teeth, so you don't have to worry about changes to your speech pattern or mispronunciation.

## 7. Stop Bone Loss

Your jaw is made for chewing, but missing teeth creates a pressure imbalance that affects the jawbone. Bone loss occurs around the missing teeth, which creates a sagging appearance over time. Since dental implants are surgically rooted to the jawbone, they mimic the roots of teeth and stop bone loss.

## 8. Less Illness

Removable dentures are exposed to potentially dangerous bacteria every time you take them out and set them down. These bacteria may cause bad breath, infections, or other illnesses, even if you are diligent about [cleaning your dentures](#). Dental implants aren't exposed to outside bacteria, and they stay clean and germ-free simply through brushing.

Perhaps now you can see why dental implants are so highly rated and considered the top replacement option for a full arch or full mouth of teeth despite the higher cost and lengthier procedural process. As dentists, we will always recommend the longest lasting option with the best overall experience for our patients, and dental implants are proven to provide the best long-term quality between the different options available.



# Are you ready for implants?

Every implant procedure begins with a consultation. During your consultation, a dentist will evaluate your need for tooth replacement, educate you on the possible risks of the procedure, and discuss your financing options for receiving the ideal care.

**[Request an Implants Consultation ›](#)**