

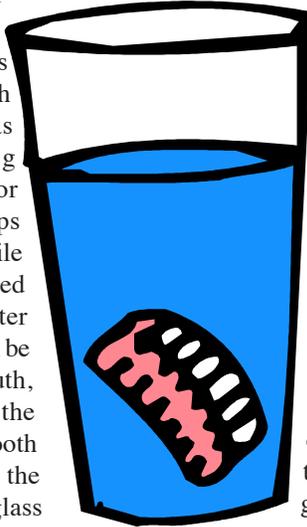


Dental Implants

Dental Implants Can Help You Avoid Glasses Later in Life

The image of your grandparents' "teeth in a glass" evokes memories of youth, a time in which this daily ritual was as common as watching American Bandstand or playing with hula-hoops and silly putty. And while you might not be thrilled that reality TV, computer games, and fast food will be the icons of today's youth, the good news is that the benefits of research in tooth replacement will erase the picture of dentures in a glass from your children and grandchildren's minds, and be replaced by a future filled with happy, healthy smiles.

Research has led to a more permanent tooth replacement option – dental implants. A dental implant, which looks like a post or cylinder, is an artificial tooth root placed into your jaw to hold a replacement tooth, bridge or den-



ture in place. While high-tech in nature, dental implants are actually more tooth saving than traditional bridgework, since they do not rely on neighboring teeth for support.

The ideal candidate for a dental implant is in good general and oral health. Adequate bone in your jaw is needed to support the implant, and the best candidates have healthy gum tissues that are free of periodontal diseases. Some implants take two to six months for the bone and implant to bond together to form anchors (osseointegration). During this time, you can wear a removable temporary tooth replace-

ment option over the implant site(s). Other implants can be placed immediately, whereby a periodontist places the implant immediately following tooth extraction and attaches a temporary *fixed* tooth replacement. Depending on your specific condition and the type of implant chosen, your periodontist will create a treatment plan tailored to meet your needs.

As you can see, dental implants are intimately connected with the gum tissues and underlying bone in the mouth. Since periodontists are the dental experts who specialize in precisely these areas, they are ideal members of your dental implant team. Not only do periodontists have experience working with other dental professionals, they also have the special knowledge, training and facilities that you need to have teeth that look and feel just like your own. Speak with your periodontist about dental implants today, and avoid glasses later in life. *SW*

From Seashells by the Seashore to Titanium Posts: The History and Benefits of Dental Implants...

Some reports indicate that this seemingly "high-tech" tooth replacement option dates back as far as 4th century BC, when ivory or wood substitutes were implanted to replace missing teeth. Others suggest that the first "dental implant" placed in a human was a tooth-like structure made of shell in the 7th century. And while the stories and research surrounding the types of dental implant materials abound, we know that most today are made of titanium. Titanium is known for its ability to integrate into the bone with little or no consequence, and was discovered for this purpose by an ortho-

pedic surgeon in the early 1950s. Since that time, dental implants have become a highly predictable and reliable tooth replacement option, and in some cases the "gold standard."

In addition to the tooth-saving benefits, many reasons render dental implants a better solution to the problem of missing teeth. Dental implants are more esthetic because they look and feel like your own teeth. Since dental implants integrate into the structure of your bone, they prevent the bone loss and gum recession that often accompany bridgework and dentures.

No one will ever know that you have a replacement tooth.

Dental implants will also allow you to once again speak and eat with comfort and confidence. They are secure and offer freedom from the irksome clicks and wobbles of dentures. They'll allow you to say goodbye to worries about misplaced dentures and messy pastes and glues.

Finally, dental implants are like a best friend -- they're reliable. The success rate of dental implants is highly predictable, which makes them an excellent option for tooth replacement.



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