



National Dental  
Centre Singapore  
SingHealth

# Dental Implants



# DENTAL IMPLANTS

Dental implant therapy was developed many years ago and has a proven track record. Improvements in materials and surgical techniques have made dental implants the gold standard treatment in many instances for replacing missing teeth.

## What are dental implants?

A dental implant is essentially a substitute for a missing tooth root. It is commonly cylinder or screw shaped. Each implant is carefully and precisely drilled into the site of the intended tooth replacement and provides a firm and stable foundation for long-term support of replacement teeth.

Almost all dental implants in use today are made from titanium or titanium alloy. These materials have been shown to be well-tolerated by the body. The terms 'osseointegrated implants' and 'endosseous implants' are widely used to describe dental implants that can develop and maintain a close union with bone in order to support replacement teeth.

## Who is a suitable candidate for dental implants?

Implants can be used to replace a single tooth, multiple missing teeth or to replace teeth where there is complete tooth loss. Almost any situation where natural teeth are missing can potentially be treated with this modality. However, various factors need to be taken into consideration such as bone volume and quality, tooth and jaw relationships, oral habits and general medical health. Your dental surgeon will assess your suitability for treatment with dental implants.

## How is treatment carried out?

The treatment is carried out by a team of restorative specialists and surgeons working in close collaboration.

### Phase 1: Treatment Planning

Thorough assessment of your medical health, oral health, the way your teeth fit together and bone quality and quantity will be done to produce an individualized treatment plan.

### Phase 2: Surgical Treatment

A minor surgical procedure is carried out to place titanium implants into bone. If the bone and/ or soft tissue at the implant site is insufficient, there may be a need for additional bone or soft tissue grafting procedures.

### Phase 3: Restorative Treatment

After integration of the implant fixtures to bone, 'new permanent teeth' will be designed and fabricated to fit over the dental implants.



Implant with gold abutment and crown on upper right central incisor



Single Implant with ceramic abutment tooth to replace missing tooth



Lower Implant Supported Overdenture

## How long does the treatment take to complete?

Normally it takes about 4 months to a year to complete the entire treatment. This would depend on case complexity as well as the need for additional procedures like bone grafting.

'Immediate Loading' implant, whereby the implant is placed and the replacement tooth is fitted on the same day is possible in a few carefully selected cases.

## How do I maintain these implants?

These 'new teeth' are maintained in much the same way as normal teeth. Specific brushing and flossing techniques will be taught, as well as regular dental check-ups instituted to check on the implants. Good oral hygiene is required to ensure the long-term success of your implants.

## For how long will the implant fixtures stay in the bone?

If the titanium fixtures have successfully integrated to the bone and are properly maintained, they should last for many years. However, just as you would expect conventional crowns, bridges and fillings to need occasional repairs or replacements during the course of their use, your implant-supported teeth may also need similar maintenance.



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