



C L I N I C

## **Dental Implants: Patient Information Leaflet**

The purpose of this leaflet is to give you, as a prospective implant patient, all the information you need to make an informed decision regarding your implant treatment. We will endeavour to explain this to you in easily understandable laymen's terms but do not hesitate to ask if there is any part that is not completely clear to you. Once you have decided to go ahead with implant treatment we will make a diagnosis and draw up a treatment plan designed specifically for your case. It is vitally important that you **understand** all aspects of your implant treatment before signing the consent to go ahead with your treatment. This also includes the instructions for after care needed by your dentist and **yourself** to maintain your implants and keep them in a healthy state.

### **What is a dental implant?**

Dental implants are the most advanced way to replace a missing tooth or teeth. It is a replacement root made most commonly of titanium which is implanted into the jaw in areas where a tooth or teeth have been lost. This then acts as a root and a replacement tooth can then be fixed to it in a similar way as a crown. They are currently the closest you can get to natural teeth and although it is impossible to beat or replicate a healthy natural tooth it is often reported by patients that implants look, feel and function like natural teeth.

### **What does the treatment involve?**

Most implants are placed under local anaesthesia similar to that used for fillings or extractions. They are inserted into the jawbone after incisions are made in the gums. The duration and complexity differs from case to case and it is important to make sure you understand how complex your own plan is. For more complex cases or nervous patients it will be advised to consider conscious sedation. Even more complex cases can be done under general anaesthesia. After a period of time the bone into which the implant is placed will attach to the surface of the implant. A small metal pin is then fitted onto the implant upon which a final restoration in the form of a crown or bridge or over-denture is fixed. The time required to complete treatment also differs from patient to patient and their individual treatment plan.

### **Who qualifies? /Are you suitable? /Range of treatments**

There is hardly anybody who is not suitable for implant treatment. With the exception of rare intravenous medical treatment all other medical conditions, managed during implant treatment, can lead to a successful outcome. It goes without saying that your dentition must

be healthy and free of gum disease. Even patients with severe loss of bone in their jaws or several missing teeth or even no teeth left at all will qualify for implant treatment, although this might require a more complex treatment plan. Growing or transplanting new bone may be required.

#### **What to expect after treatment/Aftercare**

When treatment is completed you can expect to use implant supported teeth in a very similar way to natural teeth. It is very important to understand that implant supported teeth need ongoing daily cleaning and maintenance just like normal teeth. They are very easy to clean and you will be shown how to do this.

*However failing to clean around implants on a daily basis will result in probable failure.*

Regular inspections by the dentist will also form part of the ongoing maintenance programme.

#### **Is it painful/Uncomfortable/Pain control?**

Most patients are pleasantly surprised as to how little pain is experienced after implant placement. Often none or just a couple of pain control tablets are needed on the day after the procedure. Some swelling as well as bruising for a few days after surgery can also be expected.

#### **How safe are implants?**

Implants are completely safe and you will be made aware of any anatomical structures that are at risk of damage in your particular case. Your treatment plan will point out these structures and the measures we will take to avoid damage. Even with these in place there will always remain a very small statistical risk which will be discussed with you as part of your treatment plan.

#### **Problems/Causes of failure/Success rates/How long do they last?**

A small percentage of implants fail shortly after placement and have to be removed. Smoking and excess alcohol consumption plays a major role in early and late implant failure. The risks involved with smoking will form part of your treatment plan. Poor plaque control around implants also plays a major role in late implant failure.

*Nothing lasts forever and this is also true for implant retained teeth.*

It can be accepted that a well integrated implant that is well maintained in a healthy mouth can last many years with a good possibility that this can last you your lifetime. You must also expect that crowns and/or any other structures fixed on an implant might need replacement and maintenance in the same way as normal teeth need attention from time to time. This also includes possible screw and component failures. Grinding teeth can also overload implants. All these risk factors will form part of your treatment plan. It is important not to be misled by commercially driven success claims but rather make an informed decision tailored around facts and risks relating to your specific case.

### **Temporary teeth**

During treatment you will be able to wear a temporary plastic denture or removable type bridge. This will reduce the risk of embarrassment in being without teeth.

### **Cost**

The cost of single implants compares favourably with conventional bridges while more complex cases can cost considerably more. Your treatment plan will also include a very accurate estimate of all expected fees. In the very unlikely event of unexpected extra costs it will either be discussed with yourself and added to your plan or absorbed by us.

### **Benefits/Alternatives**

The benefits of implant treatment include reliability, comfort and conservation of the adjacent teeth. More importantly, bone support and prevention of further bone loss as well as confidence in a secure dentition and improvement in overall health as oral health improves. It is also important as part of your consent in accepting your treatment plan to understand what the consequences will be if you do not go ahead with the proposed treatment as well as the possible alternatives. These include removable dentures and bridges. We are happy to discuss these options and the pros and cons involved.

### **Links to further reading**

The Association of Dental Implantology (UK) information leaflet. This document is essential reading and we will supply you with a copy or you can access it online. We will assume that you are familiar with this document when consenting to your treatment plan. Please do not hesitate to ask advice if any part is not perfectly clear to you.

<http://www.adi.org.uk/public/implant/index.htm>

Dental Implant.co.uk. This website is very informative in all aspects of implant treatment however despite being rather technical. This is recommended further reading in helping you to make an informed decision when consenting to your treatment plan.

<http://www.dentalimplant.co.uk/>

### **Treatment plan and consent**

After a thorough Implant consultation which will include study models, x-rays and a possible CT-scan you will be provided with a detailed treatment plan including cost. Attached will also be consent forms in duplicate for you to consider at home in your own time. Do not sign and return one copy of this unless you completely understand every aspect and feel totally comfortable with your treatment plan. It is also your right to withdraw from the treatment at any stage if you should change your mind even after signing the consent document. You will then only be liable for the cost of the completed parts of the treatment plan.

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