




**AESTHETIC
RECONSTRUCTIVE
JAW SURGERY**
SINGAPORE

YOUR GUIDE TO DENTAL IMPLANTS

INTRODUCTION

Losing a tooth – or several teeth – is emotionally as well as physically painful. Missing teeth can make almost every aspect of life harder: eating, talking and even smiling become difficult and embarrassing.

If a missing teeth are making you miserable, you are not alone. Millions of Americans struggle with the practical and social problems that come with missing teeth. More than two thirds of adults between the ages of 35 and 44 are missing one or more teeth, and nearly a quarter of 74-year-olds have lost all their teeth, according to the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS).

Some people blame themselves for their missing teeth. How many times have you looked into a mirror and tormented yourself with “if only” questions? “If only I had gone to the dentist more often.” “If only I had flossed every day.” Sound familiar?

It is time to stop blaming yourself. Poor dental hygiene is only one reason for missing teeth. All of the following are common causes of missing teeth.

GENETICS: Some people are genetically more susceptible to tooth decay than others. Even if you have followed a perfect brushing and flossing regime throughout your life, you could still get gum disease or tooth decay thanks to the genes you inherited from your parents.

AGE: Teeth naturally become worn and brittle as we age. They have been through a lifetime of chewing and biting, so it's not surprising they get worn down. Gums also recede naturally in old age, so the roots of your teeth are not as well protected as they once were.

ACCIDENTS: Losing a tooth in an accident leaves your remaining teeth more vulnerable. When a tooth is lost, the jawbone that was supporting it becomes weaker, which can lead to more teeth being lost. Replacing the tooth with a dental implant can prevent this from happening.

FAILED DENTAL WORK: Sometimes dental work, such as fillings, crowns, root canal treatment or occasionally orthodontic therapy, can break down or cause teeth to be removed.



WAYS PEOPLE COPE WITH MISSING TEETH

You know the lengths you have gone to in an attempt to deal with your missing teeth: giving up your favorite foods, carefully chewing only on one side of your mouth, or carrying denture adhesives around with you in case your false teeth come loose. You also remember what it was like to eat whatever you wanted, to speak without risk of embarrassment, and wonder whether you will ever get back the confidence you once had.

BENEFITS OF A BEAUTIFUL SMILE

Your smile is your most attractive feature, and it can get you far in life. Studies show that people who smile a lot are regarded as confident and successful by 72% of people, and an overwhelming 86% of people see you as more approachable if you smile.

Smiling can also improve the way you see yourself. The physical act of smiling releases feel-good chemicals (endorphins) in your brain that make you feel happier and more relaxed. These findings, reported in the book “Managing Stress: Principles and Strategies for Health and Well-Being,” suggest that smiling could be a natural anti-depressant – with no side effects and no costly psychiatrist visits.

Even your physical health could be improved by smiling. Endorphins, which are released when you smile, are natural painkillers, while dopamine and serotonin regulate blood pressure. The benefits of a beautiful smile are clearly much more than skin-deep; they affect your whole body.

If missing teeth are preventing you from smiling, you are missing out on all these fantastic benefits. It is time to change your smile – and change your life.

GETTING YOUR SMILE BACK

If missing teeth are holding you back from doing the things you want to do with your life, do not despair. You do not have to resign yourself to wearing dentures, giving up your favorite foods, or hiding your smile away.

Thanks to the development of dental implants over the last three decades, you now have an affordable, reliable and safe (not to mention beautiful) option to replace your missing teeth and restore the beauty of your smile.

A dental disaster can affect your entire life, and affect the rest of your life if left untreated. Whether you already have dentures and are looking for a better, more natural and convenient solution, or if your existing teeth are in poor condition and need to be replaced Dr. Chan can help you.

Schedule a consultation with Dr. Chan. He treats people with conditions just like yours every day. Many patients are relieved to find out that we have the answer and can bring back their beautiful smile.

WHAT ARE DENTAL IMPLANTS?

Dental implants are permanent replacement teeth that not only restore the functionality your teeth used to have, but also help to prevent serious complications of missing teeth such as bone loss.

DENTAL IMPLANTS HAVE THREE PARTS.

A titanium implant post is permanently implanted into your jawbone. Over time, the titanium will fuse with your natural bone. This integration helps to strengthen your bone and prevent bone loss, which is a common long-term side effect of missing teeth. A second titanium part known as the abutment connects to the implant post. The abutment holds the artificial tooth, or crown, in place when an implant is used to replace a single tooth. You won't ever need to remove the abutment, although your oral surgeon or restorative dentist can remove it if necessary. The crown is the new, visible part of the tooth that sits on top of the implant. Made of porcelain, it looks just like a natural tooth, and is strong enough to let you enjoy all your favorite foods.

WHO SHOULD GET DENTAL IMPLANTS?

Dental implants are an option for anyone who has missing teeth – whether you are missing a single tooth or all of them.

It doesn't matter whether your teeth were lost in an accident many years ago or had to be removed due to decay; you can have your missing teeth replaced by permanent dental implants.

Dental implants are suitable for the vast majority of people, with one exception: children and teenagers under 16 years old will have to wait until their jaws have finished growing before they can have implants fitted, except in rare cases.

If your missing teeth cause you pain or embarrassment, you are an especially good candidate for dental implants. Having permanent artificial teeth fitted could end your struggle with dentures for good.

IMPLANTS VS. DENTAL BRIDGES VS. DENTURES

A few decades ago, if you lost a tooth – and particularly if you lost all your teeth – your options were limited. Now when you are faced with the issue of missing teeth, you can choose between three possible ways of dealing with the problem.

A single tooth can be replaced by a dental bridge, which attaches to the healthy teeth on either side and disguises the gap using a false tooth. In order to attach the bridge, the healthy teeth often have to be ground down – which means you would be doing further damage to your teeth just to hide the problem.

Dentures can be used to replace all the upper or lower teeth (or both). Alternatively, partial dentures can replace several adjacent teeth. Dentures have a number of disadvantages: you have to take them out to clean them, and they can become loose when you talk or eat, leading to embarrassment. Dentures also do not solve the underlying problem of missing teeth, which is that the bone that was once supporting the missing teeth gradually becomes weaker, leading to further teeth being lost.

Dental implants closely mimic the structure of a natural tooth – as well as a natural-looking crown, there is also an artificial root that extends deep inside the gum, just like the natural root of the tooth once did.

If you have just lost a tooth, or you have been told that several of your teeth need to be removed because of decay, you might be confused about which option you should choose. Take all the time you need to consider this decision. Ask yourself the following questions:

Are you prepared to adjust your lifestyle to fit in around cleaning and caring for your replacement teeth? Are you prepared to give up foods like corn on the cob and steak? Are you prepared to cope with occasional embarrassment from your false teeth? Are you prepared to deal with your dental health problems getting worse in future?

If your answer to the above questions is 'no', then dental implants will be a worthwhile investment in your future. For most people, dental implants are the most convenient long-term option for replacing missing teeth.

What makes dental implants so much better than dental bridges or dentures? The answer is that dental implants have a number of unique advantages.

Dental implants protect the health of your jawbone. Like most parts of the body, the jawbone is strengthened through everyday use. Chewing is effectively a workout for your jawbone, just like jogging is exercise for your body. When you lose teeth, your jawbone no longer has to stand up to the forces created during chewing, so it gradually gets weaker and weaker. The bone even shrinks in size because the body thinks it is no longer needed, which can lead to your face changing shape to make you look older than your years. Eventually, more teeth fall out because they are no longer well supported by the weakened bone. Unlike dentures, dental implants can stop this weakening of the jawbone, and can even reverse it.

Dental implants bring security. If you currently live with dentures, you know how much mental energy you devote to worrying about whether they are securely fastened in your mouth. For many people, the thought of their false teeth slipping out of place when they talk or eat is mortifying. With dental implants, there is no need to worry, as the artificial teeth are firmly rooted in place and cannot move or fall out. They are a part of you, just as much as your own natural teeth are.

Dental implants are easy to care for. Do you remember the days when cleaning your teeth was a simple task? With dental implants, you can return to the brushing and flossing routine that you used to follow to care for your natural teeth. It is time to throw out your denture cleaning products and say goodbye to overnight soaking routines; your dental implants can be cleaned and cared for without having to remove them.

Dental implants can restore confidence. As they look just like natural teeth, dental implants could give you the confidence you need to smile again – without fearing that your teeth could slip out of place at any moment. Get ready to see how much more positive a place the world is when you are able to flash that winning smile.

Dental implants are a permanent solution. Unlike dentures, which usually need to be refitted and replaced every few years, dental implants can last a lifetime. Even if the crown is damaged in an accident, this part can usually be replaced without disturbing the implant root. As long as you remember to keep up your good dental hygiene routine and visit your dentist regularly, your dental implants should serve you well for the rest of your life.

With so many benefits, it is time to stop putting off the decision to get dental implants. Take a little time to make this investment in your future dental health, and then step forward into your new life with a big, beautiful smile on your face.

GETTING DENTAL IMPLANTS – WHAT'S INVOLVED?

Once you have decided that dental implants are an option that you would like to consider, there are a few simple steps that need to be taken before your new teeth can be placed.

GETTING THE FULL PICTURE THROUGH 3D IMAGING

Before dental implants can be placed, your oral surgeon needs to know exactly how your teeth and bones are positioned and connected. A 3D image of your mouth will be created using computer-aided tomography – known as a CAT scan for short.

The CAT scan is completely painless and non-invasive. You simply have to keep your head still for a few moments so that the scanner can get a clear image. Multiple X-ray images are taken at virtually the same time and combined to get a detailed 3D image, which can then be used to design your implants so that they fit perfectly in your mouth.

You want your new teeth to look and feel as natural as your original ones did. The 3D CAT scan ensures this is the case by providing the full picture of your mouth, gums and jaw.

DENTAL BONE GRAFTING

One of the things revealed by the CAT scan is the state of your jawbone. If your jawbone has become very weak or thin, you might need a bone graft. This is where bone from another part of your body, or from a donor, is implanted into your jaw.

If that sounds alarming, don't panic. Implant technology is now so advanced that bone grafting is only necessary in certain instances.

THE DENTAL IMPLANT PROCEDURE

By now, you are probably thinking that the benefits of dental implants sound fantastic – but what exactly will you have to go through to get them? Perhaps you have heard that the procedure for getting implants is lengthy and painful. If so, it is time to bring you up to date.

ADVANCES IN DENTAL IMPLANT TECHNOLOGY

The traditional process for getting dental implants used to be quite an ordeal, particularly if you needed a lot of teeth replacing. For every tooth that needed to be replaced, a hole would be drilled in your jaw. For a full set of dental implants, that could mean up to twenty-four holes in total!

Then, of course, each one of those holes needed time to heal. The healing process could sometimes take months, and during that time, you would need to wear dentures, which is far from ideal even when it is only a temporary solution.

Thankfully, technology has moved on. Oral surgeons can now replace a full arch of teeth using just four to six implants. That means fewer incisions, leading to fewer sore spots in your gums that you have to give time to heal before you can put pressure on them.

In the past, patients who had reduced bone height and/or width in their jaw bone had to have bone grafts before having dental implants placed. The bone grafts had to be given time to become integrated with the natural bone before the implants could be placed. In the past it was often necessary to harvest additional bone from other parts of a patient's body, usually the hip. This meant an additional surgery and added recovery time.

Even back in the early days of implant technology, dental implants offered some amazing benefits, but it was understandable that many people were put off by the thought of procedures that would involve weeks or months of recovery.

Fortunately, medical technology has moved on. Dental bone grafting can be unnecessary for people getting dental implants today. The precision that 3-D imaging provides enables our office to find exactly where the health bone is with no guesswork. Your new implants become integrated into existing healthy bone so that no further bone loss occurs. Dental implant typically last for a lifetime with proper hygiene and care.

Better materials, better implant designs, and better surgical techniques mean that your implants can be restored quickly and you can return to eating real food within as little as a day or two – not months. Some types of implants can even be used for chewing on the very same day that they are fitted – so you do not have to endure a soft foods diet for any time at all.

DENTAL IMPLANT SURGERY AND RECOVERY: WHAT TO EXPECT

Ask yourself: what has been holding you back from getting dental implants? Perhaps you are worried about the surgery itself? That fear is very natural. However, you can rest assured that you will not feel any pain during the procedure as you will be under anesthetic. If you are anxious, you can choose to have a sedative that makes you feel calm and relaxed, or if you prefer Dr. Chan can sedate you so you have no awareness at all of what is happening.

After the surgery, you may expect to feel some discomfort. However, most people find that they can easily manage any pain after getting dental implants using over-the-counter painkillers such as ibuprofen or Tylenol. If needed, additional pain medication would be available after discussing your condition with Dr. Chan.

Think you are too busy to get dental implants? Think again! The recovery period is very short. You will go home immediately after the surgery and will be able to return to your normal activities within a couple of days. Getting dental implants is a good excuse to be gentle on yourself and take it easy for a day or two, but there is no need to block weeks out of your schedule – most people are back on their feet and living life to the full within a few days.

TEETH IN A DAY™

In fact, one of the most impressive improvements in dental implant technology is how much less time the whole process of getting dental implants now takes, compared to the earliest types of implants. Gone are the days when you had to wait months between having holes drilled for the implants and showing off your new set of teeth. You can now get implants placed at the same time as diseased or damaged teeth are removed.

So what actually happens on the day that your old teeth are replaced with dental implants? First of all, you will be given a sedative before work begins on your teeth. Your diseased teeth will be gently removed and the deeper parts of the implants fitted into your gums. On the same day, teeth that have been carefully created in the laboratory to fit the exact shape of your mouth will be attached to the underlying implants. Once all the teeth are in place, you can go home and start using your new teeth as soon as you feel comfortable doing so.

No longer will you need to suffer the discomfort of relying on dentures for months while you wait for your implants to take root – instead you can transition from having your own natural teeth straight to permanent dental implants in the very same day. And because dental implants look so much like natural teeth, the change does not have to be obvious to other people. Losing your teeth can be an emotionally painful process, but at least now you don't have to spend months enduring the indignity of dentures or gaps in your smile.

ALL-ON-FOUR™

Dental implants can transform the lives of people who have lost most or all of their teeth. Having no or very few teeth makes eating and communicating extremely difficult. Dental implants offer an escape from dentures and a return to normal life.

The development of the All-On-Four dental implant procedure a little over a decade ago was a major breakthrough. In the past, if you needed to have all your lower teeth replaced, you would have needed to have many implant posts fitted into your jaw, and there would be a good chance that you would also need a bone graft to support the implants.

In the All-On-Four procedure, just four implant posts are fitted into the jaw to support the crowns that will replace your missing teeth. A full row of artificial teeth can be supported using just these four posts, thanks to their optimal positioning and the strength of the titanium material that the posts are made of.

The All-On-Four procedure is only slightly more complicated than fitting a single dental implant, and much simpler than traditional methods for replacing multiple teeth using dental implants. The implant posts are gently guided into place using the information provided by the CAT scan about the positioning of your bones, gums, and teeth. Two of the posts are inserted at an angle to be sure they will not interfere with the nerves in your jaw or your sinus cavity. Dentures are then fixed to the supporting implant posts, closely mimicking the appearance of natural teeth. All-On-Four implants give you the stability you need to be able to eat without pain or fear of your teeth slipping out of place.

The parts of the All-On-Four dental implant that are positioned beneath your gum line integrate with your jaw bone, where they strengthen the bone and can even stimulate it to produce new growth. This means that you should not have to worry about your jaw bone shrinking or your facial features taking on a sunken appearance, which can be a side effect of losing all your teeth. Instead, you can keep on smiling your own familiar smile all the way into old age.

All-On-Four dental implants bring plenty of reasons to smile. They are a permanent, convenient solution to total or near-total loss of your teeth. The procedure can be completed in one day. Losing your teeth can leave you feeling old, but All-On-Four dental implants can restore that youthful feeling and give you a new lease of life.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you feel that you could benefit from All-On-Four dental implants. The difference between relying on dentures or getting by with only a few teeth, compared to life with a full set of dental implants, is dramatic and truly life-changing.

REMOVABLE DENTURE WITH LOCATOR

In some situations a patient may prefer a removable denture. This approach uses dental implants placed into the jaw, similar to the All-on-4 procedure. Then a locator is attached to each implant and to the removable denture. This allows the patient to snap the denture back into place after it has been removed. Locator attached dentures may be more affordable than permanently attached dentures. However, they also introduce increased maintenance and other concerns related to removable dentures.

GETTING DENTAL IMPLANTS – THE CONCLUSION

Any surgery, however minor, can be a cause for anxiety for some people. However, the dental implant procedure really is nothing to worry about.

Sedation and anesthetic make the procedure completely painless. You can have diseased teeth removed and implants installed in the same day. Recovery is rapid – many types of implants can be used to chew with on the same day they are installed.

Do not let fears about dental implant surgery stop you from taking advantage of this amazing tooth replacement technology. Find an understanding oral surgeon that you feel comfortable with, and discuss any concerns you might have about the dental implant fitting procedure. Then step forward into your new life with a new set of teeth.



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**CLICK HERE TO
REQUEST A FREE
CONSULTATION**

LIFE IS BETTER WITH BEAUTIFUL TEETH

The benefits of dental implants reach far beyond your mouth. When you have strong, beautiful, pain-free teeth, almost all aspects of life are better.

Here are just a few of the things you can look forward to once you get your new teeth:

- Chewing on a juicy steak or biting into a crunchy corn cob without pain.
- Having your new teeth in place 24 hours a day – you never need to remove them for cleaning.
- Throwing out your old denture cleaning products and adhesives. Speaking in public with confidence.
- Flashing a winning smile that draws people to you.
- Loving the image you see in the mirror.

And do you know what the best part is? The results are instant. As soon as you come around from the implant surgery, you will be able to see your implants in place. You can use your new teeth almost right away, and the post-surgical discomfort will quickly fade over the next few days.

So what is the catch? There simply isn't one. For the majority of people with missing teeth, dental implants offer clear and tangible benefits that start taking effect almost as soon as the surgery is over.

What is even better is that the benefits won't disappear over time. Your dental implants should be strong enough and stable enough to stand up to decades of use. Did you ever think that you would still be able to bite into a crispy apple in your old age? Or smile as brightly as you did when you were 20? Dental implants could help you to continue to do those things for as long as you live – and that's great news. Why should getting older mean giving up the things you enjoy?

As long as you remember to care for your dental implants just as you would care for natural teeth – cleaning them morning and evening with a regular toothbrush and toothpaste, flossing to remove pieces of food, and attending dental checkups on a regular basis – your dental implants should last a lifetime.

YOUR NEW LIFE IS WAITING. SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS DENTAL IMPLANTS AND SEE WHAT THEY CAN OFFER YOU.