



Free Dental Implant Report

# A Patients Guide To Dental Implants



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## Dental Implants Guide

Welcome to your dental implants guide from Craigentenny Dental Care, this guide has been written to answer some of the questions that we find are more commonly on the minds of patients who attend our practice. While this guide is not intended to be a substitute for personalised information tailored specifically to your situation, we do hope that it helps you to gain a greater understanding of dental implants and how they may help your situation. If after reading this you have more questions we would love to hear them, just get in touch on 0131 669 2114 or e-mail us your questions direct.

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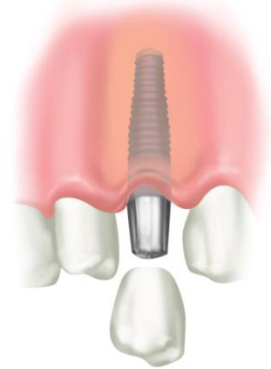
Commonly Asked Questions

## Your Situation

### A Dental Implant for 1 missing tooth

A single missing tooth is the most common situation where I get asked about dental implants. With only one missing tooth patients understandably don't want to wear a denture. The second alternative is to consider a bridge, this is essentially an artificial tooth that is attached on to a neighbouring tooth either using crown or a bonded metal wing. Bridges can be very successful solutions but very often result in some significant grinding away of the neighbouring tooth.

A single dental implant acts to replace the root of the tooth that is missing. After it is placed in the jaw with a short procedure it is left to heal for 3 – 6 months depending on whether it is on the lower jaw or the upper jaw. This time is to let the implant and the bone fuse together to create a really solid foundation for your new tooth. After this time an impression is taken and a new crown made. The crown is fixed to the implant with a screw or in some cases bonded with a cement



### Dental Implants for 2 or more missing teeth

The process is similar to the single implant scenario however with more missing teeth often a bridge is no longer an option. If the spaces are several individual teeth then each individual space is treated just like a single missing tooth. If the missing teeth are next to one another then we usually make an implant supported bridge. The good news here is that very often we do not need to have one implant for every single missing tooth so for example a 3 tooth space such as the one shown in the illustration may only need 2 implants to support all 3 missing teeth. The location of the missing teeth usually dictates how many implants are needed.



Healing times after implant placement is usually 3-6 months although with in some cases it can be a little faster.

## Dental Implants to Stabilise Dentures

Loose dentures are a real problem. The first place to start is with an assessment of your existing dentures. Put them in with no fixative and use our denture wearers checklist to ask yourself the following questions....

### Denture Wearers Checklist

- Can you make them rock from side to side by more than 1mm when you press on the back teeth on one side and then the other?
- Do the teeth meet in one area before the rest?
- Do you feel as though there is more pressure on one side of the denture than another when you bite?
- Is there space between the back teeth when you close your mouth into your usual but – go on and have a look?
- Do you feel that there is no suction to keep your top denture up on the roof of your mouth?
- Do the upper dentures drop when you smile or grimace?
- Do the lower dentures pop up when you do the same?

If you answer yes to any of the above questions, it would be wise to get the dentures checked out by a qualified dentist. There can be very good reasons why any of the above statements might be true for you but they can also indicate areas where an existing or old denture can be improved.

Now assuming you have a well fitting set of full dentures but they still do not feel secure enough to allow you to use them as you wish then the next stage would be to consider implant stabilised dentures.

Usually two implants are used on the lower jaw or four implants are used on the upper jaw. The implants are either used alone or joined by a bar. A denture is made to click over the top of the implants and bar and seat positively into place. All your friends and family see is a normal denture but the clips on the underside of the denture lock it firmly in to place. So firmly in fact that many patients need two hands to remove their dentures after fitting.



On the upper jaw the denture can usually be made in a horseshoe shape with no cover over your palate, something that many wearers report allows them to enjoy the taste of their food more. Lower implant stabilized dentures are generally the same shape and size as regular dentures but feel much more secure when you eat and smile.

## Dental Implants to get rid of dentures all together

If you want to get rid of dentures all together and want to have something fixed in place long term then there are a huge number of choices in front of you. You can if you wish choose to replace each tooth with a dental implant and crown but this is a very complex and generally more expensive way of dealing with the situation. Most implantologists would recommend using between 4 and 8 implants to support a large bridge that replaces most of the missing teeth. On the upper jaw 6- 8 implants are normal and on the lower jaw 4-6 implants are used more regularly. The exact number required depends on a huge number of factors that range from your own preferences through to the quality and strength of your remaining jaw bone.



We commonly replace a full set of upper teeth using an implant bridge on 6 implants. This number allows for some redundancy should you have a problem at a later date with one of your implants. As such it allows you to have teeth replaced ( in most cases ) as far back as the first molar. This has been shown to be enough to allow you to have a great smile, a good bite and enough teeth for effective chewing. Similar results can be achieved with just 4 implants using a technique called “all on 4” however if you experience a problem and lose even one of your implants then the bridge that they support will no longer be functional and will require replacement. For this reason we usually recommend that our patients place a slightly higher number of implants to allow for some redundancy.



## What is the process start to finish

**Initial consultation** – where we have a chat about what you hope to achieve, we can carry out a pre examination and from this start to give you more detail on how dental implants could be applied to your own situation

**Records Visit** – detailed examination, impressions and photographs are taken of your mouth. X rays of remaining teeth may be taken at this stage too. Often at this point we order a CT scan of your jaw to allow us to assess accurately in 3 dimensions the amount of bone available to hold and implant as well as its quality.

**Treatment discussion** – after considering all of your records, your treatment goals and the many factors that may be specific to your own situation, we will discuss with you in full detail your treatment options, including what is specifically involved for you, the costs, the time that will be needed for each stage. In short we cover your proposed detail in as much detail as you need to be feel that you are fully informed. Once we have agreement on how we plan to proceed we set a date to place your implants

**Implant placement is carried out** – this is generally a surprisingly comfortable procedure. Most patients are pleased at how straight forwards their experience is. After placement of your implants we review things in around 7 days to make sure that everything is healing well.

**Implant integration period** – the implants are left to fuse with the bone for 3 -6 months. This will form a solid foundation for your final restoration

Gum contouring – in some situations we carry out gum reshaping procedures to improve the shape and quantity of gum that sits around your implant.

**Final Stages** Impression of the implant and fabrication of your implant based restoration. If this is a single tooth crown just a couple of visits may be needed for more extensive bridgework 3- 6 visits may be required. The specifics of your own situation will always be discussed at your treatment discussion.

# Commonly Asked Questions

## Will I have teeth while treatment is underway?

When just a few teeth are involved we are usually able to provide some form of temporary replacement while treatment is ongoing. Where possible we will avoid the use of dentures. Under some situations a denture is unavoidable. After a consultation we will be able to discuss this as it relates to your own situation.

## How long do they last

Like any dental restoration the eventual lifespan of your implants will depend very much on how you look after them. Implants have been around for more than 20 years now and when looked after in a health patient they can last a lifetime. Ultimately no one can predict exactly how long your implants will last but many clinics now offer extended guarantees on the treatment that they provide.

Patients who have long trouble free life spans from their implants usually do the following

1. Attend the dentist every 6 month for examination
2. See the dental hygienist every 3 or 6 months for routine care and maintenance
3. Spend 5 minutes twice every single day thoroughly cleaning around all of their implants.

So clearly if you are willing to invest some time in taking care of your dental implants the outlook for them is significantly better. At Craigentenny, if you follow the 3 steps above we guarantee your dental implants for a period of 5 years

Patients who have shorter lifespans or problems with their dental implants commonly...

1. Do not keep up to date with dental examinations
2. Do not see a dental hygienist
3. Do not follow exactly the home care routines prescribed by their dentist

## How long does it take?

The total length of time treatment takes is very variable depending on many factors including whether implants are placed at the same time as the teeth are removed, placed a few weeks after or indeed after complete healing of the jaw bone. Your dentist will be able to advise you on the best time frame between tooth removal and placement of your implants.

With the traditional approach upper implants are left to heal for 6 months after placement before being restored with a crown, bridge or denture, lower implants are left for 3 months as the lower jaw bone is more dense.

Dental implants are often used as part of a complex course of treatment that may span over a longer period as such the implants may not be the factor that decides the overall length of active treatment.

### Am I too old?

There is no upper age limit for the placement of dental implants and thankfully there are only a few medical conditions that preclude the use of dental implants. We have patients from 19 – 80 who have chosen to have dental implants placed and restored by us.

### How many implants will I need ?

Here is a guide, there are however always exceptional circumstances where these guidelines would be altered to suit an individuals situation.

	Minimum number	Maximum number
One missing tooth	1	1
Two missing teeth	1	2
3 Missing Teeth together	2	3
4 Missing Teeth	2	3
A fixed bridge to replace all teeth		
Upper	4	8
Lower	4	6
Stabilise my denture so that it feels solid		
Upper	4	4
Lower	2	4



## What Are the costs ?

When looking at dental implant costs it is important to consider every stage of the process

1. Initial consultation
2. Gathering of records including an X ray or CT scan as needed
3. Planning stage where you and your dentist agree on a treatment plan
4. Placement of the dental implant /s
5. Restoring the dental implants with a crown bridge or denture ( 2 - 6 visits )

The costs will vary widely, generally in the UK they will be more than some locations abroad as UK dental practices operate within a very strict regulatory framework, all of the dentist working with you need to be insured and registered, so that if there are any problems you are protected.

Generally the costs of your implant based solution will reflect the total number of implants used and the choice of materials to restore them. Be sure when you are comparing costs that your estimate is complete and you compare like with like. A good question to ask is what will the **total cost of my whole treatment plan** be? ie. a £1800 implant and crown may seem like a great deal but more than likely there will be other costs associated with it. Our team believes in clarity and will be happy to give you guidance and accurate information on the costs of treating your own situation with dental implants after a free initial consultation.

## I have gum disease and have been told that I cannot have dental implants

This is not always strictly the case although planning your treatment may involve some difficult decisions or that you accept a higher risk of complications than patients without gum problems. Again, if you have gum disease it is best to have a good talk with one of our dentists about the options that are open to you.

## What will the new tooth / smile look like?

For all implant based restorations we use a restoratively driven approach. This means that we start by working with you to envision what the final result will look like and then working back from that point. As part of this process we produce models called "wax ups" that will allow you to have a good idea of how your teeth may look when treatment is completed. In most cases we can also transfer this "wax up" to your mouth to allow you to see directly what we feel could be achieved.

## The End!

We hope that you have found this guide useful and helpful. Dental implants are a complex and highly individualized area of dentistry which is why you may find it hard to get hold of really good answers to all of your questions.

The most important part of considering dental implants is to understand what is involved in treatment specifically for your situation as the technicalities vary widely from one person to another.

Please ask lots of questions and make sure that before you proceed with any treatment that you are completely happy with the whole process. Even if you end up choosing some one else to provide your dental implants please let us know if this guide has helped in any way

If you have more questions we would love to hear them so feel free to get in touch with us by e-mail [office@craigentinny.co.uk](mailto:office@craigentinny.co.uk) or telephone on 0131 669 2114

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