

The Truth About Dental Implants!



by Dr. Andrew Kelly

People who have lost some or all of their teeth due to decay or periodontal (“gum”) disease usually have them replaced with dentures or bridges.

While this puts teeth

back in your mouth, it requires that you develop a new chewing pattern that will allow you to eat your food and keep your dentures in place, or learn how to floss under your bridge. The truth for many denture wearers is that dentures are just a little better than nothing. The reality is that a lot of people who have lost some or all of their teeth find it easier to eat without their dentures, and many patients with bridges rarely floss under their bridge.

With modern dental implant technology, most people can now avoid the inconveniences associated with dentures and bridges. Unlike dentures or bridges, dental implants prevent bone loss by stimulating your bone in a manner very similar to natural tooth roots. If you lose one or more teeth they can often be replaced the same day. In many cases the worst choice for the patient is to extract a tooth and wait for the area to heal, because your bone starts to dissolve as soon as your tooth is removed. You can lose as much as 40% of your bone within six months of having your tooth removed.

When looking to have your tooth or teeth replaced with implants, it is important that you find a doctor that is well trained in implant dentistry. The American Dental Association does not recognize implant dentistry as a specialty so therefore no dentist can hold him/herself out as an implant

specialist. Dental implants are usually placed by a trained implant surgeon and restored by a general dentist or a prosthodontist. There are certain dentists that are trained in both the placement and the restoration of dental implants. You can find a dentist who is competent in the placement and restoration of dental implants by contacting the American Academy of Implant Dentistry at www.aaid.com.

Recently, mini implants have started to become popular. These implants, when used properly, can be very effective in temporarily anchoring a loose denture or replacing a missing tooth. There is no long-term research available to substantiate the claim that mini implants are a permanent solution for any dental problem. In addition, no mini implant is accepted by the American Dental Association as a permanent solution for the replacement of teeth or the anchoring of dentures.

Every person with missing teeth should consider the value of replacing those missing teeth with dental implant supported teeth or dentures. If you are missing one or more of your own teeth, or believe you may soon need one removed, please contact our office at **(336) 766-7966** to make a free consultation appointment so that we can talk about your specific needs.

*Dr. Kelly is a Diplomate of the American Board of Oral Implantology, a Fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry, and a Fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry. Dr. Kelly has extensive training in both the surgical and restorative aspects of implant dentistry. He has been placing and restoring dental implants for more than twenty years. Please visit us online at www.drkellysmiles.com, or call us at **(336) 766-7966** for additional information on dental implants.*