

# Placing an Implant Bridge

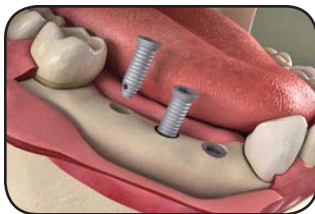
When several neighboring teeth are missing, an implant-supported bridge is an excellent treatment for replacing them.

Although each case will be different, placing an implant-supported bridge generally involves two phases. The first phase is the surgical placement of the implants. The second phase is restoring the implants with the bridge.

## The benefits of implants with a bridge

Implants restored with a bridge have several advantages. The implant stops the bone loss that occurs when a tooth is lost, and the bridge prevents the surrounding teeth from shifting into the space. Unlike a traditional bridge, there is no need to reduce the size of neighboring teeth. A bridge retained by implants looks and feels like your natural teeth when you chew and talk.

With proper homecare and regular checkups, your implants can be a long-term solution for a natural-looking smile.



*Implant posts*



*Implant abutments*



*Final bridge*



## Placing the implants

For the surgical placement of the implants, your mouth is thoroughly numbed. Small openings are made in your gums, and a channel is shaped in the bone to receive each implant.

Next we place the bodies of the implants into the prepared channels. Sometimes covers are placed on the implants, and the gums are stitched closed. This method is called a two-stage procedure. In other cases that allow a single-stage procedure, extensions are attached to the implants at the time of the surgery.

Healing may take several months as the implants become fused securely to the bone. During this time, we may place a temporary replacement bridge.

## Restoring the implants with a bridge

If the first phase included closing the gums over the implant, the second phase starts with surgical re-exposure of the implant. Small incisions are made in your gums, and an extension is placed on each implant to bring it above the gumline.

Then we schedule a series of appointments to create your final bridge. Though some of the steps might be different in your case, they usually include removing a temporary bridge and taking impressions of your mouth.

The lab uses the impressions to make an accurate model of your mouth, including the implants. They use the model to create a bridge that fits the implants and your bite.

Depending on the circumstances, we may have you try in the bridge framework, or we have you try in the final bridge. When everything is right, we secure your beautiful new bridge to the implants.