

Upper Arch, Lower Arch, and Full-Mouth Tooth Replacement

Dental implants are a wonderful advancement in dental technology that allows for the replacement of a lost tooth with an artificial one that looks and functions just like a natural tooth, thanks to a titanium post that acts as a new tooth root. While implants can be fantastic replacements for a single tooth, they can also be used in combination with other restorations to replace missing teeth of the entire upper or lower arch of the mouth, or for full-mouth tooth replacement.

Implant Retained Dentures

Replacement for a full arch of teeth will typically involve implant-retained dentures. Standard dentures rely on and are limited by how well the dentures fit the mouth. Standard dentures can be fairly easily dislodged, may require messy denture adhesives, and have limited chewing power based on how much force the supporting gum tissue can stand, generally about 25% of your normal chewing force. The benefits of implant-retained dentures include much more stability and the ability to chew with similar force to natural teeth. This means that patients who choose to receive implant-retained dentures have less fear about their dentures becoming loose or falling out, and they can also enjoy a larger variety of foods because of normalized chewing force.

So what's the difference between normal dentures and implant-retained dentures?

As the name implies, implant-retained dentures are dentures that are attached to the jaw using dental implants. These implants have been surgically placed inside the jawbone. There are three types of implant-retained dentures:

Bar-Retained Dentures - Using up to five implants that have been installed in the jawbone, a bar-retained denture is made of a small metal bar that matches the natural curve of the patient's jaw. The denture is fitted over the bar and clipped into place. The clips are made out of hard plastic and wear over time, and will need to be replaced every few years.

Ball-Retained or Locator-Retained Dentures - Also known as stud-attachment dentures, ball-retained dentures utilize ball joints at the end of each implant. These ball joints then fit into sockets that are created along the actual dentures. Locator-retained are similar to ball-retained dentures, but they are easier for the patient to get in and out, and the Locator housing inserts are more durable. Both ball- and Locator-retained dentures have hard plastic inserts that will wear over time and have to be replaced every few years.

Hybrid (non-removable) Implant-Supported Dentures – Where the other two types (bar-retained, and ball-/Locator-retained) implant-supported dentures are removable, the hybrid implant-supported denture is NOT removable. It is permanently attached to the implants, and so there is nothing to remove or insert, lose, or break! Much like your

own natural teeth, the hybrid denture always stays in, so it feels more natural. If you decide to pursue this or any other implant-supported denture option, you will be shown how to properly care and maintain the denture and supporting implants.

All-on-4

All-on-4 is a cost-efficient tooth replacement option that provides quick, long-lasting results. With All-on-4, only four dental implants need to be placed in the lower jaw and six in the upper jaw in order to secure all of the teeth being replaced. Typically, the denture is fabricated first, then the denture is worn after the implants are placed and while the implants are fusing to the bone. When the implants are strong enough to use, generally 6 months for the lower and 12 months for the upper, the denture is retro-fitted to the implants.

What makes All-on-4 a good option?

There are many other advantages to this procedure, listed below:

- It doesn't require bone grafting since it uses the existing bone structure for support
- The implants help prevent further bone loss
- All-on-4 lasts for a years and is easy to care for

If you are missing teeth and are interested in learning about how tooth replacement with dental implants can help you, contact University Dental Associates to schedule a consultation today!