Dental Implants & You

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We enjoy doing dental implants for our patients, and they are often the best treatment choice for people, providing function and health in a variety of situations. However, we have found that sometimes our patients are confused regarding treatment with implants. And for good reason! Implants are a multi-step process, and can be confusing. This FAQ document address some common questions. We hope it better explains implants and implant procedures. Please let us know if you have further questions, or if you would like to speak to your dentist for any questions you might have.

1. How long does it take?

Implants can take quite a long time. Generally, there are 2-3 steps in the process. First is growing the bone. Many patients have good bone already and skip this step. Second is placing the implant, which has to heal for 3-6 months. Finally, you have to restore the implant, making the actual teeth that go on the implant. Depending on your situation, implant therapy can take 4-12 months or longer, in some cases years. Ask your dentist for an estimate of the time you will be in treatment.

2. Do they always work?

The success rate of implants is very good, typically 95% or higher. Some host factors decrease the success rate: smoking, diabetes, poor overall health, poor healing, etc. If an implant fails to integrate in the first year, we will try it again for you, at no charge, generally speaking. Other factors may be involved. To ensure the long-term success of your dental implants, it is essential to have them restored with the final fixed hybrid denture within six months. Failure to do so may compromise the stability and success of your implants and will result in possible failure.

3. What about maintenance?

You have to clean your implants! Every day, twice a day, just like teeth. And you must come in for regular check-ups every 6 months. If you see a regular dentist, you should come back to see us every year to check your implants. If you have not been back to see us for 2-3 years, and you develop an issue with your implants, you will have to pay for repairs/replacement.

4. Is the cost of the implant all there is?

Every patient should have a complete implant plan with all the charges on it. Sometimes, though, patients pay the implant fee, and forget about the restoration fee. Make sure to budget for both expenses. While it is ok to leave implants unrestored a short while, over time they sometimes deteriorate. It is best to restore the implants in a timely manner.

Thank you, and we look forward to your successful implant treatment!

Patient Signature: _____ Date: _____