



## Dental Implants — Replacing Missing Teeth

If one or more of your teeth are missing, there are a number of ways to replace them. An alternative to bridges, partials or complete dentures may be dental implants. Implants are used to replace missing roots and support artificial replacement teeth. They are comfortable and look like natural teeth.

### What are dental implants?

A dental implant is an artificial root made of titanium metal. It is inserted into the jawbone to replace the root of the natural tooth. An artificial replacement tooth is attached to the implant. The implant acts as an anchor to hold the replacement tooth in place.

### Who does this procedure?

If you are having an implant, your dentist may refer you to a dental specialist who has further training in this area. Specialists who place implants are periodontists or oral and maxillofacial surgeons, also called oral surgeons. Specialists who place crowns, bridges and dentures on implants are called prosthodontists.

### Who can get dental implants?

If you are in good general health, have healthy gums and have enough bone in the jaw to hold an implant, dental implants might be right for you. If your jawbone has shrunk or if it has not developed normally, you may be able to have a bone graft to build up the bone. A bone graft is a way of adding new bone to your jawbone. Your dentist or dental specialist will tell you if bone grafting can be done.