



# CP DENTAL

## DENTAL IMPLANTS INFORMATION & CARE



## Implants are a great way to replace missing teeth

### WHAT IS A DENTAL IMPLANT?

Dental implants are fixed dental prostheses. When appropriate, they can be used to replace missing teeth, anchor bridges or dentures and assist in orthodontic tooth movement. A dental implant is a titanium screw that is placed within the jawbone. Once the bone and gums have healed around the implant, a component called an abutment is fitted, which will allow an artificial tooth (crown) to be attached or denture to be fitted.

To ensure longevity and health of an implant it is essential to establish and maintain good oral hygiene before, during and after the implant has been placed. Regular review appointments with your Oral Health Professional (OHP) will assist you in achieving a long term healthy outcome.

Healthy gums and bone are essential for the success of implants. Healthy gums should always look pink and firm and not hurt or bleed when touched. "Peri-implant mucositis" occurs when bacteria/plaque is not cleaned away effectively and is allowed to infect the tissues around the implant resulting in inflammation - this is characterised by redness, swelling, overgrowth and/or bleeding of the gums. The area can become very tender to touch." Peri-implantitis" is a result of advanced, aggressive peri-implant mucositis.

Over time, the supportive bone surrounding the implant is gradually broken down by bacterial action associated with the peri-implant mucositis infection. The gum covering the bone around the implant may also shrink away, exposing the implant. This can be a painless process and if not detected early, may result in implant mobility and eventual loss.

Smoking, poor oral hygiene and previous tooth loss history will place you at higher risk of developing peri-implant mucositis and/or peri-implantitis. To assist with the success and survival of your implant it is important to see your Oral Health Professional (OHP) before implant placement and for regular reviews.

### ACTIVE MAINTENANCE WITH AN OHP

For ongoing review and maintenance of your dental implant we recommend seeing an OHP every 3 to 6 months initially. Regular professional examinations (including gentle probing and measurement taking around the implant) and cleans will help detect problems early. During these appointments your OHP will be able to assess the health of the gums and supportive bone (by examination and radiographs) and assist with providing personalised advice and education on maintaining and cleaning your implant effectively.

**TRANSPORT:** You will be unable to drive following your procedure. You will need to arrange suitable transport home. A responsible adult who can take you home must accompany you.

Dental Radiographs (x-rays) are an important diagnostic tool for assessing the health and stability of your implant. The radiographic image is a record of the bone height and density around the implant, identifying any changes or breakdown should they occur, and to ensure the implant continues to function correctly. Once the implant has been placed, your dentist or OHP will take a radiograph to use as a baseline record. Your OHP will then recommend updating this radiographic record every 6-12 months depending on your risk status and the type of implant placed.

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### Looking after your implant is crucial to longevity

#### CARING FOR YOUR NEW DENTAL IMPLANT

There are many different oral hygiene products available to assist with cleaning around your dental implants. It is important to avoid scratching or damaging the surface of the implant by using incorrect cleaning aids. If the implant surface becomes scratched, it can harbour greater numbers of the harmful bacteria responsible for infection. It is important to consult with your Oral Health Professional (OHP) regarding the most effective and safe products to use.

#### TOOTHBRUSHES

An electric, or manual toothbrush may be recommended to help care for your dental implant. It is important to use a small headed, soft bristled brush to gently clean around the implant at least two times per day. Your OHP will be able to show the ranges of special toothbrushes available.

#### FLOSS

There are special flosses designed for cleaning around implants, these include TePe Bridge & Implant Floss, Oral B Superfloss and/or iDontix X-Floss. It is important to clean not only the crown but also around the abutment attachment. Your OHP can show you special techniques that will facilitate this.

#### INTERDENTAL BRUSHES

Interdental brushes are a valuable cleaning aid for between teeth/crowns and come in a broad range of sizes and shapes. They act to stimulate and massage the gum whilst removing bacteria and debris from around the implant and the area in between the crown and the abutment. Your OHP will be able to show you which size or style is suitable for your implant.

#### ORAL IRRIGATORS

An oral irrigator or water jet is a device which flushes streams of pulsating water around the teeth, implants and soft tissues assisting with debris removal. Your OHP will advise you on the correct use of irrigators.

#### MOUTH RINSES

Your OHP may recommend the use of a hydrogen peroxide or chlorhexidine based mouth rinse - Colgate Peroxyl (hydrogen peroxide) or Colgate Savacol or Curasept (chlorhexidine). It is important to discuss the use of these products with your OHP as prolonged use is contraindicated.

#### SMOKING AND GENERAL HEALTH

Smoking is a contraindication for implant placement due to its association with implant failure. Smoking impairs blood flow and healing of the oral tissues including those around implants. This reduction in blood flow can have a negative effect on the health of the implant. Your OHP can assist you with advice and ongoing support on quitting, prior to placement of your implant. Your medical history and current health status can significantly affect the oral cavity, healing ability and oral health risks status. Unstable diabetes can affect healing around the implant and also affect soft tissue disease management. It is important to discuss your health, medical status and medications with you OHP prior to your implant placement. Your dental implant should act and function in a similar way as your natural teeth but they do require extra care and vigilance to ensure optimal health and longevity.

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