

MAINTENANCE OF IMPLANT/S & PROSTHESIS

What you need to know about the long-term maintenance of your implant/s & prosthesis

Congratulations!! on receiving your new implant/s and its prosthesis (supporting tooth/teeth). Your implants can serve you for years if you keep your mouth healthy and follow your preventive care program.

Bite

The prosthesis may feel foreign for a short period of time, however there should not be any discomfort. The occlusion (bite) should blend in with the existing 'bite' and not impede this unless your dentist has intentionally altered it as part of the treatment. He will advise you of that. If you still feel that the bite is high or uncomfortable, please advise us at your review appointment and adjustments may be made.

It is best to be gentle with chewing on the new prosthesis for a few weeks as you may still be adjusting to the new bite. The bone around the implant/implants has never been loaded (chewed) on so it may still be immature and weak. Over a period of a few months the bone will mature and strengthen.

It is recommended that you maintain a soft diet (eg. pasta, fish, boiled vegetables, non-crusted bread) for a month. We will advise you if your situation differs.

Home Care

Much of the success of your implants depends on keeping each abutment post clean and plaque- free. Just like natural teeth, you need to clean both the post and the prosthesis, after every meal.

Brushing

a) **Removable:** You should brush the inside and outside of your removable prosthesis with a soft brush and soapy water.

To avoid damaging the prosthesis if you accidentally drop it, you should always clean it over a basin filled with water and a thick cloth to cushion the fall.

b) **Fixed:** Brush your fixed prosthesis thoroughly, as you would with your natural teeth.

c) You may want to use a cordless electric toothbrush, such as Braun, Oral B, Sonicare, or Rotadent. They are very effective in cleaning in and around the implants.

d) You may want to use an interdental brush. Make sure it has a nylon-coated centre wire to avoid scratching the soft metal surface of the abutment posts.

e) Oral irrigators are also effective in reducing plaque accumulation around implants and natural teeth.

f) Chlorhexidine gel should be applied onto the brush and used just like toothpaste around the implants. Sometimes your dentist may also recommend a mouthwash.

Flossing

You need to floss now more than ever before. You may be asked to use a special floss to clean around the gums, posts and teeth. The floss can be used to deliver Chlorhexidine gel to the implant on a daily basis.

- a) Floss around the abutment posts of a removable prosthesis with the teeth removed.
- b) You may need to use a special, wide floss for additional help in cleaning your implants called 'Superfloss'
- c) You may need a floss threader to assist in introducing the floss under the bar and bridges so these areas can be easily cleaned.



Yarn



Floss

The floss is wrapped around the crown. The floss cleans by pushing the floss up into the gum using a sawing motion.



Super floss



Soft bristle brush



Interdental brush

Bruxing splint

Quite often your dentist may have recommended a splint or if you already have one constructed as part of your treatment, it is very important to be consistent in wearing the splint. This custom-made acrylic plate is to protect all your teeth and implants from the damaging force of grinding. As well as stopping you 'loading' your jaw joint which can lead to headaches and a general feeling of tiredness.

Hygiene visits

Regular hygiene visits every 4-6 months are extremely important. The long-term success of your implants relies on them. They form the basis of your preventive care program. Please ensure you attend these.

The hygiene team will clean your natural teeth, the implants, abutment posts and the prosthesis. They will assess your home hygiene level and provide help in areas you may have trouble with. X-rays will also be taken periodically to assess the bone level of your implants. Your bite will also be checked and adjustments may be required from time to time.

Removable prostheses are held in place by attachments that are embedded in the underside of the denture. There are also rubber o-rings in the denture and these do wear out. You will feel the denture gets looser as it happens. They wear out at different rates for individuals and they can be changed at the hygiene appointment. The cost of your ongoing hygiene visits and other maintenance are additional and are not part of the initial cost of the implant treatment.

Other maintenance

The teeth on the denture are made of plastic and they do wear out and will need to be replaced every few years. The gums which the overdenture sits on will still change with time so the denture will need to be relined to ensure it continues to fit intimately. The entire denture will need to be replaced approximately every 10 years.

The teeth hardly wear out on a fixed bridge as they are generally made out of ceramic. The ceramic on the bridge can chip but is generally repairable. Ceramic bridges though, require less maintenance from the wear and tear perspective, though they may still need replacement every 12 to 15 years just like crowns on teeth.

Please contact the surgery if you notice any of the following conditions:

- Pain
- Feeling of looseness
- Clicking or metallic snap while eating
- Breakage of the prosthesis
- Swelling, pus drainage or redness of gum tissue around the implant or abutment post
- Feeling of the bite being different
- Peculiar taste

Or please feel free to call us tell us how much you love your new smile

