

All about dental implants



We'll do whatever it takes and then some.

What is an implant?

Dental implants — artificial replacements for natural teeth and roots — are an alternative to partial and full dentures or bridges. The implant, working like a tooth, offers more comfort and stability than dentures. Implants can restore the ability to chew food and may improve speech and facial appearance.

Implants are manufactured “anchors” that resemble cylinders or screws. Used in upper and lower jaws, they are surgically inserted into the jawbone to become a stable base for artificial replacement teeth. The implant itself acts as the root of the tooth. The crown, bridge or denture placed over the implant will look and perform like the natural tooth that was lost.

How are implants placed?

Implant surgery is performed in a dentist's office, in a three-step process that could take up to nine months to complete:

- A dentist surgically places an implant directly into the jawbone. Following this initial surgery, the implant will usually remain covered for three to six months, to allow the bone to develop around the implant to help hold it in place.
- Once the bone has developed, the dentist uncovers the implant and attaches an extension, called a post, to the implant. Several more months often are needed for the gum tissue to heal around the post.
- Once healing is completed, the implant can serve as a foundation for the new tooth. The dentist then makes a crown (or other artificial tooth replacement) and attaches it to the implant post.

How effective are implants?

Depending on their location in the mouth, implants have reported success rates between 85 and 90 percent. When implants fail, it is usually because of poor oral hygiene.

Dentists typically give specific instructions on how to care for dental implants.

How much do implants cost?

Compared to dentures and bridges, costs for implants are higher, but they more closely simulate the appearance and function of natural teeth.

To determine the cost of an implant, Delta Dental enrollees can ask their dentists to obtain a pre-treatment estimate. This free service ensures you know up front what the dental plan will pay and the difference you will be responsible for.

Who can get implants?

The best candidates for implants are those in good general health who have healthy gums and sufficient bone structure. Success of the implant depends on regular dentist visits along with a personal commitment to good oral hygiene.

Implants may be less successful for people who smoke, those who grind or clench teeth and patients with diseases such as diabetes. Check with your dentist to see if implants are the right choice for you.

Information for this article courtesy of the Academy of General Dentistry and the American Dental Association

WE KEEP YOU SMILING®

Why do 54 million enrollees trust their smiles to Delta Dental?

- More dentists
- Simpler process
- Less out-of-pocket

Free Newsletter

Get the latest in oral health with *Dental Wire*, our bi-monthly e-mail newsletter. Sign up at: deltadentalins.com/oral_health

www.deltadentalins.com

Delta Dental includes these companies in these states:
Delta Dental of California – CA
• Delta Dental of Pennsylvania – PA & MD • Delta Dental of West Virginia – WV • Delta Dental of Delaware – DE • Delta Dental of the District of Columbia – DC • Delta Dental of New York – NY • Delta Dental Insurance Company – AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, MT, NV, TX, UT

How healthy is your smile? Take our online quizzes to find out!



Visit the Oral Health & Wellness section on www.deltadentalins.com to take the following quizzes:

- Dental Cavity Quiz
- Gum Disease Quiz

Questions about oral health?

If you've got questions about oral health, be sure to check out our website at www.deltadentalins.com for answers.

To help you and your family keep your smiles healthy, we've compiled an extensive library of articles on oral health topics from amalgam fillings to x-rays and just about every oral health topic in between.

Mouth-Body Connection

- Diabetes and oral health
- Heart disease and oral health
- Men's oral health
- Oral cancer
- Osteoporosis
- Pregnancy and oral health
- Stress and oral health
- Tobacco use and oral health

Preventive Care

- Brushing and flossing
- Dental cleanings
- Fighting bad breath
- Fluoride
- Nutrition and oral health
- Choosing and caring for your toothbrush

Emergency Care

- Dental care when traveling
- Handling dental emergencies

Kids & Teens

- Baby bottle tooth decay
- Children's oral health
- Eating disorders
- Teens' oral health

Seniors

- Dental care of Alzheimer's patients
- Dentures
- Seniors' oral health

Dental Treatments

- Amalgam and resin fillings
- Braces
- Dental implants
- Dental x-rays
- Sealants

Conditions

- Dry mouth
- Mouth sores
- Sensitive teeth
- TMJ