



Dental Implant Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a dental implant?

A dental implant is an artificial, self-sustaining tooth root inserted into the jawbone that replaces the original tooth root, which may have been previously damaged or lost. Dental implants support replacement teeth, crowns, bridges or partials and do not rely on other teeth for support. Implants look, feel and function exactly like your natural teeth.

2. Am I a candidate for dental implants?

Advances in dental implant technology have made it possible for almost anyone who is missing one or more teeth to be a candidate for dental implants. Specific health conditions such as uncontrolled diabetes or heavy smoking may affect successful results. With our expertise in the implant process, we have even been able to help many individuals who have been told implants will not work.

3. What are the benefits of implants over other cosmetic procedures?

- Dental implants are fixed and permanent, so they are never removed and never shift around while you speak or eat.
- Dental implants are easy to maintain and not susceptible to cavities.

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- With dental implants, chewing ability is almost entirely restored, allowing you to enjoy all the foods you love with ease.
- Because dental implants act as natural teeth, they preserve your facial structure by preventing bone loss and improve the health of your smile by avoiding damage to surrounding teeth.

4. What is the length of treatment time for dental implants?

While the traditional two-stage procedure for dental implants involves several months and multiple procedures, immediate function implants are designed to provide more stability and join with the bone more effectively. This allows Dr. Stevens to insert implants, place the abutment and attach the replacement teeth in a single day. During your consultation, Dr. Stevens will determine which dental implant method is most appropriate.

5. Is it painful to have a dental implant procedure?

The level of discomfort associated with dental implants is affected by the type and number of implants being used as well as the health of the bone and gum. The procedure is usually done with a local anesthesia with conscious sedation. Most patients compare the discomfort associated with the procedure to a tooth extraction and return to work the next day. We will prescribe medication to reduce any soreness and discomfort. With the All-on-Four procedure, healing time is minimized and patients report only minor soreness the next morning and are eating that afternoon.

6. Who is qualified to place dental implants?

While any licensed dentist may place dental implants, most are placed by doctors who have additional training. Dr. Stevens has received extensive training in implant dentistry. Very few general dentists have placed and restored as many dental implants as Dr. Stevens.

7. How difficult is it to maintain dental implants?

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Dental implants are cared for just like natural teeth. Patients should maintain good dental hygiene and continue with regularly scheduled dental appointments. Patients are often advised to schedule professional cleanings every three months.

8. Is there a maximum age to receive dental implants?

While age does not affect implant success, general medical health is a factor in deciding dental implant treatment for the elderly. Therefore, in addition to health history, a physical, blood tests, or cardiograms may be administered before deciding treatment.

9. What is the success rate for dental implants?

Dental implant success rate depends on the location and purpose of the implant, but on average about 95% of dental implants are successful. The success rate is close to 100% for those tooth implants placed in the front of the lower jaw and 85% for those tooth implants placed in the sides and rear of the upper jaw. The success rate is typically higher for the lower jaw because the bone is denser. If an implant has remained anchored for at least five years, it is considered successful.

10. How do dental implants work?

Dental implants provide a new tooth root to which new teeth or dentures may be anchored. The implant becomes a permanent part of the jaw.

11. Will insurance cover the cost of dental implants?

Some of the costs associated with dental implants are occasionally covered, but the dental implants themselves are an elective procedure. We invite you to talk with one of our finance coordinators to review your policy and to determine the method of payment which best fits your specific needs.

Most dentists in Lancaster do not offer dental implants. Contact Dr. Shea F. Stevens to schedule a consultation at 717.581.0123.

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