

Dr Ken Stalker Dental Practice

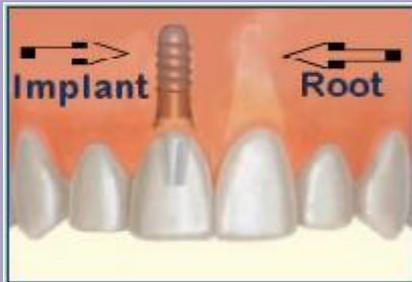
Fact Sheet

Dental implants

In the past replacing lost teeth meant the fitting of a denture or bridge. Both these can be successful but have disadvantages as they depend largely on the health of the remaining teeth and gums. A denture or 'plate' is not fixed in the mouth and some people find this embarrassing and are concerned that it may fall out during talking or eating. Bridgework involves the cutting down of healthy teeth and can be difficult to make if many teeth are missing or supporting teeth are heavily filled or suffer from gum disease.

Nowadays there is an alternative, Dental Implants. Implants are one of the more significant recent advances in dentistry. These state of the art medical devices can restore the function and appearance of missing teeth giving the feel and look of real teeth again.

How do they work?



Dental Implants are small titanium screws, which create an artificial tooth root. These are placed into the jaw where teeth have been lost by a small surgical procedure. These are left to heal in the jaw for a few months where they become fixed rigidly. They can then be used to support new teeth, from just one tooth, to a whole jaw if needed. The new teeth are usually made from tooth coloured porcelain producing a natural appearance, which is almost impossible to spot against natural teeth.

Ken was the first dentist in Abingdon to provide implant treatment, treating his first cases nearly fifteen years ago. Although highly experienced with existing techniques he has continued to keep abreast of recent developments in technology and procedures, attending advanced courses both in the UK and

Recently the practice has invested in state of art 3D computer technology NobelGuide™ which allows us to place implants without the need for conventional surgery. For patients this means much less invasive treatment and teeth fitted straight away.

Frequently asked questions

Is it painful?

Anaesthetics and sedation eliminate discomfort during the procedure but just as with any surgery, there can be some post-operative pain. However this will be similar to that of having teeth removed and medication can be provided to alleviate this discomfort. In some cases it may be possible to replace a tooth at the same time as it is removed with an implant. This has the advantage of preserving the bone and gum, which is usually lost, when a tooth is removed.

How successful is it?

Very! Long term studies have shown over 97% success rates.

Can anybody have the treatment?

Yes, more or less, and age is no barrier to treatment. The patient must be healthy and there should not be any disease affecting healing e.g. uncontrolled diabetes. Heavy smoking or excessive alcohol consumption may affect the success of treatment but does not rule it out.

How many visits are involved?

This will be related to the scope of the treatment but a straight forward case will usually involve about 3 or 4 visits. Techniques are being developed that allow us to reduce the number of visits and in some cases it is possible to fit a new tooth at the same time as one is extracted!

Is it expensive?

Implant procedures, which vary in complexity and extent depending on the patient's dental condition and requirements, can involve a significant investment. However a survey of 350 patients after completion of their treatment revealed that not only was it worth the investment, but that they would happily do it again.

Do all dentists provide implants?

Implant treatment requires special equipment and training and not all practices are able to provide this. If you have to lose a tooth, or already have, then your dentist will discuss the options available to you, which in most cases will include implants. If they do not provide this option themselves, they will arrange for you to see a dentist that does. More information can be obtained from the Association of Dental Implantology.