What are implants?
Implants are a man-made replacement for the natural tooth root. They are the best replacement option in dentistry today. Implants can replace one to all missing teeth, or be used as attachments under dentures. Implants will improve your ability to eat your favorite foods, prevent bone loss, and improve your oral and overall health.

Single Tooth Replacement
When a tooth is lost it is best to replace it with a non-removable replacement as soon as possible. Replacement options include a bridge or an implant.

Bridge vs. Implant
Bridges attached to natural teeth use two roots to do the work of three teeth, including the missing tooth. The adjacent teeth have to be shaved down; 80% of these teeth don't even have a filling before being shaved down. Bridges have a 30% chance of failing in 15 years. The most common reason for losing a bridge is decay in an adjacent tooth. Often the adjacent tooth is lost, which now leaves two missing teeth instead of one. Bridges last on average 10 years.

Implants have a 97% chance of still being healthy and functional after 13 years, which make them cheaper in the long run. Some patients have kept their implants for 30 years or more. The adjacent teeth are spared being shaved down as with a bridge. Implants cannot decay and do not increase the risk of decay to the adjacent teeth as with a bridge.

Multiple Teeth Replacement
Implants become a better option the more teeth you have missing. The longer a bridge is (the more missing teeth you replace), the more strain it will put on the remaining teeth. Implants will give you more teeth to eat with and reduce the strain on your remaining teeth. If you have no teeth at all, implants can replace them.

Dentures
Twenty million Americans have no teeth at all. They can suffer significant functional, esthetic, health, and social side effects. Bone loss begins when teeth are pulled. This bone loss is continuous for the rest of your life.

As long as teeth are present the bone is preserved, as in the jaw on the left; once the teeth are pulled the bone loss is continuous, as in this jaw on the right. As a consequence dentures are relined or...
remade every few years to fit the shrinking jaw bones. Eventually it
becomes too uncomfortable to wear a denture and some patients
are unable to wear a denture the last 10-15 years of their life; their
grandchildren may not know them with teeth at all. The bone loss
causes the jaw to jut forward and the skin to wrinkle around the
mouth – as in “witch’s chin,” or “bitter beer face.”

Loose dentures make speaking and eating more difficult. Dentures
have 20% the bite strength of natural teeth. Studies show that most
denture wearers avoid certain foods and are deficient in vitamins
and other nutrients. Food that doesn’t get chewed as well is more
difficult for the digestive system to process. These nutritional
problems decrease overall health and the quality of life, and may
even shorten the lifespan.

All social events in our society revolve around food. People who are
dissatisfied with their dentures, appearance, or ability to eat
comfortably may have low self-esteem and avoid social gatherings.

Implants support and preserve bone, preventing continued bone
loss. Implants stabilize and strengthen dentures. A clip attachment
inside the denture clips onto the implants. Sore spots, slipping
dentures, eating challenges, and other problems associated with
loose dentures can be corrected with implants. Dentures attached
to implants have 85% the bite strength of natural teeth. Patients can
again enjoy their favorite foods, better nutrition, health, quality of life,
and a longer life. They can enjoy social outings and be more
confident of their smile.

Don’t partial dentures replace the missing teeth just as well?
Because partial dentures are supported by the bone and gums they
actually speed up the bone loss in these areas. Partial dentures
clasp onto teeth and increase the strain to the remaining teeth,
increasing the chance that they will be lost. After 5 years 65% of
partial denture patients don’t use their partial denture at all due to
discomfort or additional tooth loss.

Implants support bone and prevent bone loss. Implants replace
missing teeth roots, so they have better chewing strength than
partial dentures. Implants don’t increase strain on the remaining
tooth; actually, by doing some of the work of chewing, the strain on
the remaining teeth is reduced.

Am I too old for implants?
Health – not age – is the determining factor for implant placement.
Your dentist will review your health history prior to implant surgery.
A 65 year-old today has a 50% chance of living past age 85 and a
25% chance of living to age 95. Implants are a good investment in
your health if you expect to live another 20 or 30 years, or even
another 7 years.

Being too young may prevent you from having implants. Implants
can only be placed once growth of the jaw bones has completed.
This is usually after age 15 in girls and after age 17 in boys.

Aren’t implants expensive?
Depending on the complexity of your treatment plan, implants
involve a significant investment. Previous implant patients report
that not only was it worth the investment, but they would gladly do it
again.

Some dental insurance plans cover a portion of implant fees.
Payment plans are available as well. Our financial coordinator can
assist you with these payment options.

How long does treatment take?
It depends on your needs. Implant appointments range from 30
minutes to a few hours and are scheduled over the course of
several months to observe proper healing.

Will there be discomfort?
As with any surgery, there can be some pain. Post-operative pain
may be similar to having a tooth removed. Anesthetics, sedatives,
and medications will help alleviate the discomfort.

How long do implants last?
Some implants have lasted 30 years, though this is not the average.
Your home care is an important factor in making implants last.
Chronic conditions like diabetes, or smoking and excessive alcohol
intake increase the risk of implant loss and make home care much
more important. You’ll have to take better care of your implant than
the tooth that was lost.

Full dentures, partial dentures, and bridges are adequate options,
but implants are a better option. We are excited to offer you the
best dentistry has to offer. Implants are an exciting option to return
your mouth to the proper contour, function, comfort, esthetics,
speech, and health.