



Dental Implant What Is It Like & Treatment Steps

What is treatment like?

The implant procedure is a team effort involving you, Dr. Stevens and the Smiles by Steven's team. A treatment plan will be tailored to meet your needs depending on your specific condition and the type of implant chosen.

- **Replacing a Single Tooth** - If you are missing a single tooth, one implant, an abutment or a crown can replace it. A dental implant replaces both the tooth and its root.
- **Replacing Several Teeth** - If you are missing several teeth, implant-supported bridges are a viable replacement option.
- **Replacing All of Your Teeth** - If you are missing all of your teeth, an implant-supported full bridge or full denture can replace them.
- **Sinus Augmentation** - A key to implant success is the quantity and quality of the bone where the implant is to be placed. The upper back jaw has traditionally been one of the most difficult areas to successfully place dental implants due to insufficient bone mass and the close proximity to the sinus. Sinus augmentation can help correct this problem by raising the sinus floor and developing bone to allow proper placement of dental implants.

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- **Ridge Modification** - Deformities in the upper or lower jaw can result in inadequate bone mass, making it difficult to place implants. To correct the problem, the gum is lifted away from the ridge to expose the bony defect. The defect is then filled with bone or bone substitute to build up the ridge. Ridge modification has been shown to greatly improve appearance and increase your chances for successful implants that can last for years.

Step 1

Schedule a consult with Dr. Stevens to discuss the best option for you. Dr. Stevens has the skills and expertise to perform every step in the dental implant process from his Lancaster, PA office, so there is no need to visit multiple locations.

Step 2

Prior to the actual dental implant procedure, Dr. Stevens will assess your teeth and gums. He will need to control any existing tooth decay or gum disease before the surgery. These precautions are taken to ensure that you are in optimal oral health.

Step 3

Dr. Stevens will require radiographs, and in some cases a CT scan, to check the quality and quantity of the bone surrounding the missing tooth and look for any abnormalities prior to proceeding with the dental treatment. Also, diagnostic models may be taken to provide a complete implant assessment.

Step 4

If a patient is found to have insufficient bone mass in the jaw, a bone graft will be required prior to the dental implant procedure. The most common bone used is from a tissue bank. This is so the patient will not require another surgical site to obtain their own bone. Over time, the grafted bone will fuse to the existing bone creating a better site for the implant.

Step 5

Dr. Stevens determines the proper anesthesia required for the surgery. Most dental implant procedures are performed under a local anesthetic though certain patients may require oral sedation due to anxiety issues.

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Step 6

Following the preliminary procedures, a hole (osteotomy) is made in the jawbone where the dental implant is to be placed.

Step 7

Once the osteotomy is made, the titanium implant is placed into the hole in the jaw. The surrounding tissue is sometimes sutured over the implant then removed after 14-21 days.

Step 8

The implant is left to heal and integrate with the surrounding bone-- a process known as osseointegration. This healing process takes three to six months. A healing abutment will be placed to shape the tissue. The patient has an option of wearing a temporary removable device during healing.

Step 9

Once the osseointegration is complete, an impression of the implant is taken. This is necessary to begin the process of forming the new tooth.

Step 10

In approximately 3-4 weeks, the dental lab will fabricate a custom titanium abutment and the final porcelain crown. Dr. Stevens will then fit the abutment and crown into the patient's mouth and make any adjustments that may be needed. All home care and maintenance will be reviewed.

What can I expect after treatment?

Dental implants require the same conscientious oral care as your natural teeth, including daily brushing and flossing. After treatment, Dr. Stevens and his staff will help to develop the best care plan for you. Periodic follow-up visits will be scheduled to ensure that your teeth and gums remain healthy

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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