



## Tired of Missing Teeth and Loose Dentures?



Shea F. Stevens DMD, FICOI  
www.cosmeticcreationsdmd.com

The effects of missing teeth can be detrimental to your long term oral and medical health. Missing teeth are also associated with old age and can make you look older than you are. Replacing missing teeth can dramatically improve your smile and the shape of your face. This greatly enhances both your dental health and self-esteem.

**Dr. Shea F. Stevens** resides in Lancaster with his wife Aileen, his daughter Rowan, and two dogs. Dr. Stevens attended undergraduate school at West Chester University and went on to receive his DMD degree from Temple University School of Dentistry. He graduated from dental school summa cum laude and received the OKU Dental Honor Society Award. Dr. Stevens attended a ten month maxicourse for the surgical placement and restoration of dental implants. He maintains memberships in American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, American Academy of Implant Dentistry, Academy of General Dentistry, Lancaster Seattle Study Club, Lancaster County Dental Implant Study Group, and the College of Conscious Sedation. Dr. Stevens received hands-on training for porcelain veneers to enhance a smile with Dr. Bill Dorfman of "Extreme Makeovers." Dr. Shea F. Stevens is amongst the youngest to receive a fellowship in the International Congress of Oral Implantology and Top 20 Dentists in Pennsylvania 2009 and 2010.

Having gaps where teeth are missing affects the way the jaw closes. The remaining teeth begin to tilt and drift into the gaps. In addition, food can become trapped in these spaces, increasing the risk of decay and gum disease. The tilting and drifting can also cause problems for the opposing teeth. An opposing tooth will begin to hyper-erupt and begin to drift into the open space of the missing tooth, causing the opposing jaw-line to have bite relationship problems; thus beginning TMJ problems (problems with the jaw joint).

As soon as a tooth is lost, either from gum disease or an extraction, the supporting bone in the jaw begins to dissolve. This process is called resorption. The longer a tooth is missing, the greater the bone loss. Over time, resorption of the jawbone has a considerable effect on quality of life and on the possibility of replacing the missing teeth. As teeth are lost it becomes more difficult to eat and chew food. Studies have shown that 29 percent of denture wearers eat only soft or mashed foods and 50 percent avoid many foods altogether. And over time, more and more of the jaw bone disintegrates until it becomes very difficult to place any dental restoration.

A tooth should be replaced as soon as it is lost. This will retain your oral health by preventing bone loss, reducing movement of surrounding teeth and avoiding excess decay. Teeth provide more functions than just the ability to chew. They are necessary for the health of the gum and jaw tissues as well, and a prolonged absence of a tooth will severely limit the possibilities for restorations. Missing teeth may also affect your confidence and well-being.

With the introduction of dental implants, the need to suffer with uncomfortable restora-

tions has been eliminated. As our life span has been increasing, the need for some type of highly functional dental replacement system has become increasingly important. Dental implants are permanent dental replacements that are both natural looking and very functional. Implants look much better and feel better, and offer the same force for biting as natural teeth. If you are a non-smoker with good oral hygiene habits, dental implants should last for a lifetime.

A dental implant is a small, sturdy, titanium post that acts as the root structure would for a natural tooth. A single tooth or a full arch of teeth which have been lost due to injury or disease can be replaced with dental implants. Titanium metal is used because of its compatibility with bone and oral tissues. A dental implant is placed into your upper or lower jaw bone. After the bone has grown around the implant, implants can hold a crown, bridge or over-denture just like roots hold natural teeth in place. Implants are very durable and can last a lifetime. They require the same maintenance as natural teeth; this includes brushing, flossing and regular dental check-ups.

Your teeth stimulate the surrounding bone with each bite. This preserves the integrity of the bone. When a tooth is lost, the bone is not stimulated and begins to shrink away. A dental implant keeps this bone intact and can prevent both bone loss and gum tissue shrinkage. In addition, because a dental implant replaces the root structure, the jawbone is better preserved. A dental implant is also much easier to clean as compared to a bridge. And unlike a bridge, an implant can not be affected by cavities. A dental implant is an excellent way of replacing a single tooth without the disadvantages of a fixed bridge or removable dentures. It is the

**smiles by stevens**

Dr. Shea F. Stevens, DMD, FICOI  
General, Cosmetic & Implant Dentistry

101 N. Pointe Blvd.  
Suite 201  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-581-0123  
www.smilesbystevensdmd.com

Creating confidence...  
one smile at a time.

ideal treatment for a missing tooth because it does not affect your adjacent teeth. That means no grinding or crowning of your natural teeth for bridges, and no clasps for removable partial dentures. Dentures will fit more securely and comfortably with an overdenture implant. This will minimize any discomfort and movement (slipping) that is common with normal dentures. Many older adults are turning towards dental implant supported dentures for their greater comfort and confidence with dentures. Many people are often able to eat the foods they couldn't with their old dentures.

Contact **Smiles by Stevens** to schedule a consult to see if you are a good candidate for dental implants. At the consult, **Dr. Shea F. Stevens** will evaluate the quality

and quantity of your bone, and review photos, videos, and the dental implant procedure. If you are dealing with missing teeth, failing bridges, and loose dentures, you owe it to yourself to receive treatment that will allow you to chew and smile with confidence.



before



after