

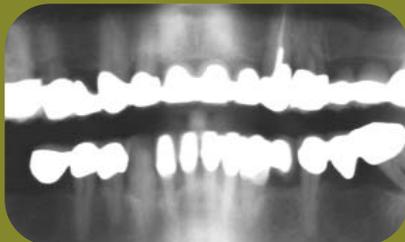
DENTAL IMPLANTS

Do You Miss Your Teeth? – Missing teeth can cause embarrassment and psychological scars. Modern dentistry holds an answer though and the results are giving patients something to smile about. Jennifer Barnes invited Beverly Hills periodontist, **Dr. Sharyar Baradaran**, to a Q & A to explain what we need to know to get our smiles back.

1



Before treatment: Patient has missing teeth and bone loss due to periodontal disease



After treatment: Reconstruction by Dr. Baradaran using implants to replace missing teeth



A natural looking smile was recreated



What can be done for missing teeth?

Technology is advancing so quickly in the area of dental implants, we can now almost copy nature and get back the teeth we were meant to have. Dental implants are an ideal option for people who have lost a tooth or teeth due to periodontal disease, injury, or some other reason (e.g., a cracked root or genetically missing teeth).

Dental implants are so natural looking and feeling, you may forget you ever lost a tooth. The implant is a biocompatible titanium screw that looks similar to the root of a tooth, which is placed in the jawbone. We allow the bone to engage the implant, which takes several months, and then a crown is connected to the implant. The result is a tooth that feels and looks exactly like a natural tooth, and patients cannot tell that it is not their real tooth. Due to the strength and permanence of this procedure, the result is not just cosmetic, but functional as well. (2)

What was done before implants?

Before, we used to have to grind down healthy, natural teeth on either side of the missing tooth to attach a bridge for support. Or, the other option was to wear a removable denture that did not look natural and had functional limitations.

Traditionally, dentures are made to fit on the ridge of the gum tissue. A denture is a large, acrylic appliance in the mouth. Frequently, there is a need to psychologically and functionally adapt to eating, as well as speaking. Over time, dentures begin to wobble and loosen. They also cover the roof of the mouth, thus minimizing the patient's sensation of taste. In addition, dentures may alter speech.

Teeth that look and feel like your own

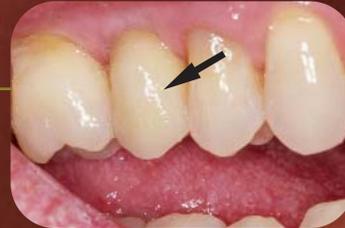
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Root infection and tooth fracture as a result of patient grinding teeth



Implant placed by Dr. Baradaran to replace fractured tooth



Final implant crown

Are dentures on their way out because of implants?

Yes, I would say dentures are becoming obsolete. Few new dentures are being made. In fact, people who have had dentures made years ago are now asking how they can replace their dentures with implants.

What are advantages of dental implants?

Aesthetic: Dental implants look and feel like your own teeth! Since dental implants integrate into the structure of your bone, they prevent the bone loss and gum recession that often accompany bridgework and dentures. No one will ever know that you have a replacement tooth. **(3)**

Tooth Saving: Dental implants don't sacrifice the quality of your adjacent teeth as a bridge does, because neighboring teeth are not altered to support the implant. More of your own teeth are left untouched, a significant long-term benefit to your oral health.

Confidence: Dental implants will allow you to once again speak and eat with comfort and confidence! They are secure and offer freedom from the irksome clicks and wobbles of dentures. They'll eliminate the worries about misplaced dentures and messy pastes and glues.

Reliable: The success rate of dental implants is highly predictable. They are considered an excellent option for tooth replacement. Generally speaking, implants are successful in about 94% of the cases in the upper jaw, and 98% of cases in the lower jaw (the bone in the lower jaw is more dense so it has a higher success rate).

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Patient born without permanent tooth



LEFT: Before X-ray



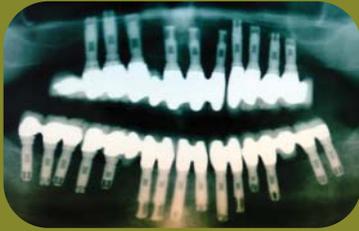
RIGHT: After implant was placed by Dr. Baradaran



Final implant crown

4

All teeth replaced with implants. Teeth were lost due to periodontal disease



Patients natural smiles after completion of reconstruction



Upper jaw



Lower jaw



5

Implant abutments; A phase of treatment



Implants placed by Dr. Baradaran



Final implanted crowns



DENTAL IMPLANTS

Teeth that look and feel like your own

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If a tooth must be removed, can you replace it with implants at the same time?

Sometimes we can, other times we wait a few weeks or months; sometimes if the patient has lost a lot of bone, we actually have to rebuild the bone before the patient can have an implant. The patient never leaves the office with a missing tooth. A temporary tooth is always made in advance.

How do you rebuild the bone?

The best thing to do is to use the patient's own bone. We borrow some bone tissue from around the wisdom tooth area, the chin or side of the jaw. In more complicated procedures bone might be taken from the patient's hips.

Do dental implants need any special care or maintenance?

Dental implants are like your own teeth and will require the same care. The patient visits their dentist and periodontist for regular routine hygiene and x-rays, as they would have done anyway.

What if a patient is missing most or all of their teeth?

We analyze the bone with a three dimensional x-ray called a CT to determine which strategic sites have the best bone and the corresponding number of implants will be planned with the restorative dentist and the laboratory technician. (4)

Does this surgery hurt and is anesthesia required?

Local anesthesia is used while the patient is awake, but the area being worked on is completely numb. Patients don't feel anything while removing the tooth, while the bone is being rebuilt, or while the implant is being placed. For those patients who prefer not to think about the treatment, there is the option of undergoing light IV (intravenous) sedation so that although they are still awake, they feel as if they have experienced a relaxing nap during the procedure.

What is the recovery like?

After an implant is placed into the bone, numbness from the local anesthesia will last for a few hours. Patients can then take over-the-counter pain medications to alleviate any discomfort and as necessary additional medications are prescribed. The majority of patients are able to resume their usual routine the same day or the following day.

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Infection in the bone requiring the tooth to be removed



Implant placed by Dr. Baradaran



Final implanted crown

Why do people have missing teeth, other than trauma?

Gum disease, also known as "periodontal disease," is a major cause of missing teeth. Depending upon how far your periodontal disease has progressed, treatment can vary widely. If the disease is caught early, simple procedures of "scaling & root planning" can be done. This procedure removes the plaque and calculus from below the gum line toward eliminating the infection-causing bacteria. If the disease has advanced to the point where the periodontal pockets are deep and the supporting bone is lost, surgery might be necessary.

Could my periodontal disease be genetic?

Research proves that up to 30% of the population may be genetically susceptible to gum disease. Despite aggressive oral care habits, these people may be six times more likely to develop periodontal disease. Identifying these people with a genetic test before they even show signs of the disease and getting them into early intervention treatment may help them keep their teeth for a lifetime. (5)

Can we pass the disease on?

Periodontal disease may be passed from parents to children and between couples, according to an article in the September, 1997, issue of the Journal of the American Dental Association. Researchers suggest that bacteria-causing periodontal disease are passed through saliva. This means that when a family or couple come into contact with each other's saliva, they're at risk for contracting the periodontal disease of another family member. Based on this research, the American Academy of Periodontology recognizes that treatment of gum disease may involve entire families. If one family member has periodontal disease, the AAP recommends that all family members see a dental professional for a periodontal disease screening. AA&CSM

The Periodontist

What does a Periodontist do?

Our job is to save teeth. A periodontist is a dentist who specializes in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of periodontal disease, and in the placement of dental implants. Periodontists receive extensive training in these areas, including three additional years of education beyond dental school. Periodontists are familiar with the latest techniques for diagnosing and treating periodontal disease, enabling them to also perform cosmetic periodontal procedures to help achieve the smile you desire. Every effort is made either with gum surgery, tissue transplant "periodontal plastic surgery," or special cleaning techniques. The dental implant procedure should be seen as a last resort. We only suggest this when we can't save the teeth.

Do I visit my dentist first?

Often, dentists refer their patients to a periodontist when their periodontal disease is advanced. However, you don't need a referral to see a periodontist. In fact, there are occasions when you may choose to go directly to a periodontist.

At what age should I visit a periodontist?

Look for family genetics. If anyone in your family has had gum problems or have lost teeth, that should sound alarm bells. We treat patients in their 20's and up. There is no magic number, but there is a genetic component. It is better to consult with a periodontist and be given the all clear than to wait until it is too late.

Will insurance cover any of these procedures?

Some do and some do not. The majority of gum treatment by a periodontist is covered under most dental plans. However, reimbursement to the patient is always predicated on their individual dental coverage. The more sophisticated procedures, such as implants, are covered at a lesser status. Most insurance companies consider this procedure as a cosmetic treatment. However, our office staff will endeavor to work with your insurance company to secure maximum benefits.