All About Dental Implants: How They Work | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/all-about-dental-implants/

Details:

A dental implant is a titanium screw that is placed surgically in the jawbone to replace the root of a missing tooth. After healing, it can support a crown, a bridge or a denture. Titanium bonds with the surrounding bone, so the implant can act like the root of a natural tooth. At Core Dental our team includes a Specialist Periodontist and we work with Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. Whether implants suit you depends on an examination and your own circumstances.

What is a dental implant?

A dental implant is a small titanium screw that sits in your jawbone. Titanium naturally bonds to bone, forming a firm connection so that the implant acts like the root of a natural tooth. Once the implant and surrounding tissues have healed, your dentist fits an abutment and a final restoration, such as a crown, a bridge or an implant-retained denture. The primary purpose of an implant is to replace the missing tooth root so that a replacement tooth has a stable base.

What causes tooth loss, and how can missing teeth affect your mouth?

Common causes of tooth loss include gum disease, accidental trauma and smoking. Missing teeth can affect more than appearance. Neighbouring teeth can drift out of alignment and become crooked. The jawbone can also lose density, because the tooth root that helps keep the bone strong and healthy is no longer there. This is one reason we encourage people to talk to us early about replacing a missing tooth.

How long does dental implant treatment take?

For conventional implants, the bond between implant and bone, called osseointegration, commonly takes about three to six months after placement. The whole treatment plan may take longer if you need an extraction to heal first, bone grafting or other preparation. The abutment and final restoration are fitted when the implant and tissues are ready. Your dentist must give you an individual estimate after an examination.

What types of dental implants are there?

There are two main types of dental implants: conventional and immediate. With conventional implants, the implant heals for three to six months before it is loaded with a replacement tooth. Immediate implants are loaded in the same visit as the implant is placed. Immediate implants are an option for some people, but they are not suitable for everybody. The main factors are bone density, and whether several implants are being placed and joined together. You can read more on our pages for conventional implants , immediate implants and All-On-4 dental implants .

Why does bone density matter, and what is bone grafting?

Bone density is a key factor in whether an implant can be placed successfully. Where there is not enough bone, bone-grafting surgery may be needed before placing an implant, to build up the bone. Your dentist or specialist can check your bone with x-rays or an OPG and explain whether a graft is likely to be part of your plan.

Who provides dental implants at Core Dental?

Our team includes a Specialist Periodontist, and we also work closely with Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. This means your plan can be shared between practitioners where that is appropriate for your case. You can read about our periodontists and oral and maxillofacial surgeons , or meet the team on our dentists and registered specialists page.

How much do dental implants cost?

The cost of dental implants depends on several things: whether bone grafting is needed, how many implants are placed, and how they are finished, with a crown, a bridge or a denture. The qualifications of the clinician and their choice of implant componentry also play a part. As an indicative guide only, these item fees have been published by us:

Dental item	Indicative fee
Item 243, osseous graft (bone grafting), per tooth or implant	from $350
Item 688, insertion of single stage endosseous implant, per implant	$1,930 to $2,210
Item 661, fitting of abutment	from $800
Item 672, full crown on implant	approximately $1,400 to $1,600

These fees are general guides and can change. Please confirm the current written terms, what a quoted figure includes and any health fund rebate before booking or paying. An examination and investigations such as x-rays or an OPG are needed to prepare a quote. We provide a written quote that lists dental item numbers, which matters if you have private health insurance with extras cover. Ask us when you book what the first consultation involves. We offer interest-free payment plans, and you can read more about affordability at Core Dental .

What should you ask before having implants?

It helps to ask what the recommended approach is meant to achieve, whether there are other options such as a bridge or denture, what preparation and aftercare involve, and what the risks and limitations are. Smoking and gum health can affect how an implant heals, so tell us about both. You may also like to read dental implants or root canal treatment and does smoking affect dental implants? .

How can we help?

If you would like to talk about replacing a missing tooth, our team can arrange an assessment at any of our nine practices, including Core Dental Wyndham , where implants are offered. Call 13 13 16 or book online. For a full discussion of tooth replacement options and a more accurate estimate for your case,

ask to see our periodontist.

The two parts, and the months in between

An implant is described in the published advice as two components and one biological process. The process is the part that sets the timeline, and it is worth knowing before anything starts.

What it is. The Victorian Department of Health: "A dental implant is made of 2 main parts: a titanium screw that fuses with the jaw bone and a ceramic tooth that fits over the screw."

What it does, and the distinctive advantage. It "replaces a missing tooth or teeth, without damaging neighbouring teeth."

That clause is the real argument for an implant over a bridge. A bridge is "metal or ceramic crowns that are attached onto supporting teeth", and the Department warns that "bridges may involve removing a lot of healthy tooth structure on either side of the missing tooth", with the consequence that "it is irreversible for the surrounding teeth; once a tooth is cut for a crown to support a bridge, it will always need a crown."

What is assessed first. "The area of the missing tooth needs to be studied to make sure it is suitable for an implant. This includes looking at the gum and bone health, amount of space, your bite, and your general health."

Five things, and general health is one of them — which matters for the risks below.

The sequence. "The titanium screw is placed into the jaw bone." Then: "It can take up to 6 months for the bone to fuse strongly to the screw. A temporary tooth may be provided for you to wear in the meantime." And finally: "When the bone is ready, a mould (impression or digital scan) of the screw's position in your jaw is taken and sent to a lab for the ceramic tooth to be custom-made."

Up to 6 months for the bone to fuse. That is the Department's figure, and it is biology rather than scheduling. A temporary tooth in the interim is the published norm.

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Cosmetic dentistry and teeth whitening, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 12 December 2025). Accessed 6 November 2026.

The four published risks, including who is at greater risk

The Department publishes four risks for implants, and two of them are more consequential than the usual "may need replacing" caveat.

Risk one: the ceramic part. "The ceramic can chip or break and need replacing."

Risk two: the bone may not accept it, and specific groups are named. "The bone may not fuse to the implant, and the implant will need to be removed. People who are at a greater risk include those who: smoke; have diabetes; have some bone conditions such as osteoporosis; are immune compromised."

Four groups, named by the Department. If any applies to you it belongs in the conversation before the assessment, not after — and it is also why "your general health" is on the list of things studied first.

On smoking the Department's separate advice reinforces the point: people who smoke or vape have "a higher risk of gum problems, tooth loss, complications after tooth removal and surgery in the mouth". On diabetes, its lever is specific: "For people with diabetes, keeping blood sugar levels well-controlled will help to reduce the risk of gum disease."

Risk three: cleaning, and what happens if gum disease takes hold. "It is more difficult to clean around an implant than a natural tooth. Gum disease around an implant can be very difficult to treat. If severe, the implant will need to be removed. This area may no longer be suitable for future implants."

That last sentence is the one to sit with. A failed implant site may not take another one, so the cleaning obligation is not cosmetic maintenance — it protects the option itself.

Risk four: the anatomy around the site. "Depending on your anatomy, there may be some risk of damage to nearby structures like nerves or sinuses."

Which is why the home-care question is asked before treatment, not after. The Department asks you to weigh "how much effort you would be prepared to put into looking after your teeth at home in the future", because "most cosmetic dental treatment requires extra care at home to prevent tooth decay, gum disease or other problems. Cleaning the area well and having a healthy diet is essential."

What good cleaning means around an implant. The Department's general standard applies: brush twice a day with "a toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles" and fluoride toothpaste, and clean between teeth daily "with dental floss, interdental brushes, or another tool recommended by an oral health professional" — the last clause matters here, because which tool suits an implant is a clinical question. Without cleaning between teeth, "up to a third of each tooth doesn't get cleaned".

And the gum-disease signs to report , since an implant site is where they matter most: "bleeding gums"; "red/swollen gums"; "receding gums (the gum line shrinks away from the tooth making teeth look longer)"; "bad breath"; "a bad taste in the mouth"; "tenderness when biting"; "loose teeth, or teeth that have moved". The Department's timeframe for bleeding gums is four weeks: "If your gums do not improve or if they keep bleeding after four weeks, see your oral health professional."

On the prerequisite and the questions. "The first step is to make sure your teeth and mouth are in good health", and "treat any disease first. Your health is the priority." Before agreeing: "What options are available and the pros and the cons of each option."; "What results can be reasonably expected."; "What costs, time and money, are involved and if payment options are available."; "Any possible side effects or complications."

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Cosmetic dentistry and teeth whitening, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 12 December 2025); Effects of smoking and vaping on oral health, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 24 September 2025); Gum disease, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 1 August 2025); Teeth and mouth care, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 25 July 2025). All accessed 6 November 2026.

Frequently asked questions

Are dental implants suitable for everyone?

No. Suitability depends on your general health, gum health and the amount of bone in your jaw. Your dentist or specialist will examine you, review x-rays and explain whether implants, or another option, suit you.

How long does the implant healing period last?

For conventional implants, healing commonly takes about three to six months after placement. If you need an extraction, bone grafting or other preparation first, the full plan can take longer.

What is the difference between conventional and immediate implants?

Conventional implants heal for three to six months before being loaded with a replacement tooth. Immediate implants are loaded in the same visit. Immediate implants are not suitable for everybody.

Will I get a written quote before implant treatment?

Yes. We quote before treatment starts, with dental item numbers and the associated costs. Please confirm the current terms and what is included before you proceed.

Can I use private health insurance for implants?

Your extras cover and its rules determine any rebate. We offer HICAPS on-site claiming, and our written quote lists the item numbers you can check with your fund.

What is a dental implant made of?

Two parts. The Victorian Department of Health: "A dental implant is made of 2 main parts: a titanium screw that fuses with the jaw bone and a ceramic tooth that fits over the screw."

How long does the bone take to fuse?

"It can take up to 6 months for the bone to fuse strongly to the screw. A temporary tooth may be provided for you to wear in the meantime."

What is assessed before an implant is offered?

Five things: "the gum and bone health, amount of space, your bite, and your general health", in the Department's own list of what is studied to "make sure it is suitable for an implant".

What is the advantage over a bridge?

An implant "replaces a missing tooth or teeth, without damaging neighbouring teeth". A bridge, by contrast, "may involve removing a lot of healthy tooth structure on either side of the missing tooth", and "it is irreversible for the surrounding teeth".

Who is at greater risk of an implant not working?

The Department names four groups: people who "smoke; have diabetes; have some bone conditions such as osteoporosis; are immune compromised". In those cases "the bone may not fuse to the implant, and the implant will need to be removed".

Does smoking really affect it?

The Department's separate advice is that people who smoke or vape have "a higher risk of gum problems, tooth loss, complications after tooth removal and surgery in the mouth".

How hard is it to clean around an implant?

Harder than a natural tooth, and the Department is blunt about the consequence: "It is more difficult to clean around an implant than a natural tooth. Gum disease around an implant can be very difficult to treat. If severe, the implant will need to be removed. This area may no longer be suitable for future implants."

Which cleaning tool should I use?

That is a clinical question. The Department's gum advice is to "clean between teeth daily with dental floss, interdental brushes, or another tool recommended by an oral health professional" — and around an implant the last clause is the operative one.

What gum signs should I report?

"Bleeding gums"; "red/swollen gums"; "receding gums (the gum line shrinks away from the tooth making teeth look longer)"; "bad breath"; "a bad taste in the mouth"; "tenderness when biting"; "loose teeth, or teeth that have moved". For bleeding gums the Department's timeframe is four weeks.

Are there risks to the structures around the site?

"Depending on your anatomy, there may be some risk of damage to nearby structures like nerves or sinuses."

Can the ceramic part break?

Yes. "The ceramic can chip or break and need replacing."

Does my mouth need to be healthy first?

Yes. "The first step is to make sure your teeth and mouth are in good health", and "treat any disease first. Your health is the priority."

What should I ask before agreeing?

"What options are available and the pros and the cons of each option."; "What results can be reasonably expected."; "What costs, time and money, are involved and if payment options are available."; "Any possible side effects or complications."

Related services and further reading

Dental implants

Conventional implants

Immediate implants

All-On-4 dental implants

Implant retained dentures

Dentures or implants for seniors

Everything you need to know about dental implants

Periodontics

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans, with HICAPS on-site claiming.

Call 13 13 16 or book online at coredental.com.au.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm, Sunday closed

This article is general in nature and does not replace advice from a registered dental practitioner who has examined you. Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

What is a titanium dental implant used for?

A dental implant is a titanium screw placed in the jawbone to replace a missing tooth root. At Core Dental it can later support a crown, bridge or denture once the bone has healed around it.

What are the common causes of tooth loss?

Common causes of tooth loss include gum disease, accidental trauma and smoking. Core Dental can assess the cause and discuss replacement options with you.

How can missing teeth affect your oral health?

Missing teeth can allow neighbouring teeth to drift out of alignment. The jawbone can also lose density because the tooth root that helps keep bone strong is no longer present.

How long does osseointegration take for a conventional implant?

Osseointegration, the bonding of implant and bone, commonly takes about three to six months after placement. Core Dental's dentists give an individual estimate, which may be longer if grafting or extraction healing is needed.

What types of dental implants does Core Dental provide?

Core Dental provides conventional implants, immediate implants and All-On-4 implants, as well as implant-retained dentures. Suitability depends on an examination, bone density and your individual circumstances.

Which practitioners place dental implants at Core Dental?

Our team includes a Specialist Periodontist, and Core Dental works closely with Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. We can share your plan between practitioners where it suits your case.

What factors affect the cost of a dental implant?

Cost depends on whether bone grafting is needed, how many implants are placed and whether they finish with a crown, bridge or denture. Core Dental gives a written quote with item numbers after assessment.

How do I book an implant assessment at Core Dental?

Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au. Ask for an implant assessment, and we will arrange a time with a suitable practitioner at one of our nine practices.