Dentures or Implants for Seniors | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/dentures-or-implants-for-seniors/

Details:

Dentures and dental implants are both ways to replace missing teeth, and each suits different people. A denture is a removable appliance that rests on the gums, does not need surgery and can often be made quickly. A dental implant is a titanium post placed in the jawbone to support a crown, bridge or denture. At Core Dental we explain both options at an examination so you can choose what suits your health, budget and lifestyle.

What is a denture?

A denture is a removable prosthetic device designed to replace missing teeth and the gum that has been lost with them. It consists of a plate or framework that supports one or more artificial teeth and can be made from acrylic or cobalt chrome materials. Dentures can replace a single tooth or many teeth, and they can be made for the upper jaw, the lower jaw or both.

What are the main benefits of dentures for seniors?

Many older patients choose dentures because they offer practical advantages:

Dentures are generally a cost-conscious way to replace missing teeth, and a range of designs is available to suit different budgets.

They are removable, which makes them easy to clean and maintain.

They can be made in a laboratory in a relatively short time, which makes them suitable in some situations after an extraction.

They can replace a single tooth or several missing teeth.

They do not require a surgical procedure, which can matter if you have health conditions or take medication that makes surgery less suitable.

Dentures also have limits. They can feel bulky at first, they may move when you eat or speak, and the lower denture in particular can be harder to keep stable. A review with your dentist helps with fit and comfort over time.

What types of dentures are available?

There are four main types of dentures:

Partial dentures replace some missing teeth and can be made from acrylic, metal or flexible resin.

Full dentures replace all of the teeth in one or both jaws.

Over-dentures fit over existing teeth, tooth roots or dental implants to add stability.

Immediate dentures are placed on the same day as tooth extraction, so you are not without teeth while your gums heal. They usually need adjustment or relining as the gums change shape.

Your dentist will recommend a type based on how many teeth you are replacing, the health of your remaining teeth and gums, and what is comfortable for you. You can find out more on our dentures page.

How should you look after dentures, and how often are they replaced?

Dentures need daily care. Clean them every day, remove them at night and store them in water or a denture cleaning agent, as your dentist advises. Keep up your check-ups, because the mouth changes with age and the gums can shrink, so regular adjustments or relines help maintain fit.

Dentures commonly need replacing every five to seven years as the artificial teeth wear down with daily use, although this varies from person to person. Our article on maintaining dentures has more day-to-day tips.

What is a dental implant?

A dental implant is a small titanium post that is placed into the jawbone by a surgical procedure. Over time the implant integrates with the surrounding bone and acts as a support for restorations such as porcelain crowns, bridges or dentures. Implants can replace a single tooth, several teeth or support a full set of teeth.

Who might consider implants, and who might not?

Implants may suit people who have enough healthy jawbone and good general health, and who want a fixed solution or extra stability for a denture. They involve surgery, healing time and a higher up-front cost than a basic denture. Conditions such as uncontrolled diabetes, smoking, gum disease and some medications can affect healing and long-term results, and your dentist will talk these through with you. Where bone has been lost, a bone graft may be needed first, which adds to the time and cost.

Many seniors choose a middle path, an implant-retained denture, where a removable denture clips onto a small number of implants for improved stability. Our implant-retained dentures and dental implants pages explain these options.

How do you choose between dentures and implants?

There is no single right answer. It helps to think about:

your general health and any medicines you take

the amount of healthy bone and gum you have

whether you would prefer a removable or fixed solution

your budget and how you would like to spread the cost

how many treatment visits and how much healing time suits you

We recommend bringing your medical history and a list of your medicines to your first visit. Your dentist can examine your mouth, take any imaging that is clinically needed and explain the options, risks and limitations of each. A written treatment plan lets you compare stages, appointments and costs before you decide.

What does it cost, and can you pay over time?

The fee depends on the type of denture or the number of implants, any extractions or bone grafting, and the materials used. We quote before treatment starts. We offer interest-free payment plans, including Payright (0% interest, fortnightly instalments over 3 to 30 months, plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility) and TLC loans ($2,001 to $50,000 over up to 84 months, rate set by credit assessment). Figures published as at September 2026, confirm when you book. Private health fund rebates vary with your level of cover, and we claim on-site with HICAPS.

How can we help?

If you are thinking about dentures, implants or an implant-retained denture, call 13 13 16 or book online at any of our nine clinics. Implants are discussed at clinics such as Wyndham , and our team can tell you which practice and clinician suit your treatment. Read more on dental implants at Core Dental Wyndham .

What are dentures made of, and why does the material matter?

Material affects comfort, thickness and how the denture holds in place, so it is worth understanding before you choose.

In dental prosthetics the colouring follows the anatomy: pink for the base and gums, and tooth-coloured for the replacement teeth.

Acrylic partial dentures

Acrylic is the familiar option. The whole denture, base and replacement teeth, is made from acrylic resin, which keeps the cost down and makes adjustment straightforward.

Metal-based partial dentures

The base of these dentures is made of a strong alloy containing cobalt and chrome, with pink acrylic used for the portion of the denture that replaces the gums. Metal clasps are attached to the metal base to assist in keeping the denture in place, and when the denture is worn those clasps are partially or fully covered by your lips.

A major advantage of using metal for the base is the ability to make it thin, and therefore more comfortable against the soft tissues. A second design benefit over the acrylic variety is the greater support provided by a meticulous fit, which minimises the impact on your existing teeth.

Flexible resin partial dentures

These are made from a flexible material rather than a rigid one, and they come with clasps that may be made out of the same pink flexible material, so there is no visible metal.

Why do dentures need relining, and how often?

Because the mouth underneath them keeps changing, while the denture does not.

There can be changes to the gums, lips and cheeks over time, especially in women, and this becomes particularly noticeable after five years with the same denture. We recommend that dentures be refitted and relined periodically throughout their life to counteract shrinkage of the gums, which will otherwise loosen their fit.

A denture that has become loose is not simply an inconvenience. A poor fit changes how the forces of chewing are spread across the gums, and it is a reason to be seen rather than to persist with adhesive.

What is an over-denture, and when is it used?

An over-denture fits over existing teeth, tooth roots or dental implants rather than resting on the gums alone.

The advantage of an over-denture over a full denture is that the remaining teeth or the implants act as a secure anchor. That changes the experience considerably, because stability no longer depends on suction and muscle control alone.

What is an immediate denture, and what are its limits?

An immediate denture is fitted on the same day the teeth are extracted, which ensures that the patient does not spend any time without teeth.

There is a trade-off. The immediate denture cannot fit as accurately as a denture made after the teeth have been extracted, because it is made before the final shape of the healed gum is known. It can sometimes be made to fit well with a reline, but in most cases it is used as a temporary denture, with a new one being made several months later. It is worth knowing that in advance, so the second denture comes as a plan rather than a surprise.

What are dental implants made of?

Titanium, in almost all cases, and the reason is biological rather than mechanical.

Titanium is a biocompatible material, which means it is accepted by the body rather than treated as a foreign object. It serves as a strong foundation for replacement teeth, with a high success rate and a long lifespan.

Ceramic implants are the alternative. A type of dental ceramic, they have not been in use for as long as titanium implants, but so far have proven to be quite durable.

The crowns attached to the implants are a separate question from the implant itself. They are usually made of all ceramic, or of high-grade porcelain fused to precious metals such as gold.

What are the stages of implant treatment?

Implant treatment runs over months rather than appointments, and the waiting is the part that does the work.

A thorough investigation of your medical and dental health, with assessment of bone density and of the sinuses.

Placement of the titanium screw, after which the gum is generally allowed to heal for approximately two to three months.

Surgical exposure of the implant and placement of a healing cap.

Records taken for the crown. At Core Dental we send these to a Melbourne laboratory, where they act as the blueprint for your dental crown, which is created by hand.

Approximately two weeks later, removal of the healing cap and placement of your new crown. An Australian-made crown is then affixed to the titanium screw.

The result is intended to be a natural-looking and natural-functioning replacement tooth, although as with any treatment the outcome varies between people.

When are implants not suitable?

Suitability is assessed rather than assumed, and several things can rule implants out or require work first.

Implants are most suitable when there is adequate bone density in the underlying jaw to support them securely. Where that is lacking, bone grafting surgery may be required to correct the deficiency before implants can be placed.

Implants may be unsuitable for patients with diabetes, where the implant would be likely to contact the sinuses, or where bone density is inadequate because of osteopenia or osteoporosis. An oral and maxillofacial surgeon can generally assess all of these risks and advise on suitability.

Cost is a genuine factor too. Because of the surgical and technical complexity involved, dental implants are the most expensive tooth replacement option, so they may not be the right choice for someone for whom price is the deciding consideration. For the same reasons of complexity, we recommend seeking treatment only from a registered oral and maxillofacial surgeon, whose registration you can confirm on the AHPRA register at ahpra.gov.au.

When do implants have the aesthetic advantage?

Where the appearance of the replacement is the priority, implants offer more control than the alternatives.

From an aesthetic perspective, replacing missing teeth may improve the appearance of a smile by filling gaps. Because dental implants offer control over the length, width, alignment and shade of the replacement teeth, this option is generally recommended when aesthetics are a priority. Implants also do not need to be removed for cleaning and maintenance, which some people find more convenient day to day.

None of that makes implants the right answer for everyone. The cost, the surgery and the healing time are all real, and they are weighed against these advantages rather than outweighed by them.

Who does what in your treatment at Core Dental?

The split between general dentist and specialist is worth knowing before you start, because it affects who you see and when.

At Core Dental your initial consultation, as well as any aftercare and maintenance, takes place with a general dentist. A specialist takes care of all surgical components of the treatment, whether that is implant placement or the surgical stages of denture treatment. You can read about our specialist care and our oral and maxillofacial surgery services, and check any practitioner's registration at ahpra.gov.au.

Frequently asked questions

Are dentures or implants more suitable for seniors?

Neither is right for everyone. Dentures avoid surgery and can be made relatively quickly, while implants involve surgery but can offer a fixed or more stable result. Your dentist will assess your health, bone and budget, then explain which option or combination suits you.

How long do dentures last?

Dentures commonly need replacing about every five to seven years because the artificial teeth wear and the gums change shape. Adjustments and relines can extend comfort in between. Your dentist will check the fit at your regular visits.

Do I take dentures out at night?

Usually yes. Dentists generally advise removing dentures at night to rest the gums and storing them in water or a denture cleaning agent. Your dentist will give advice that suits you, including how to clean your gums and any remaining teeth.

Are dental implants painful?

Implant surgery is usually done under local anaesthetic, with sedation sometimes offered. Some soreness and swelling can follow, and recovery varies between people. Your dentist will explain what to expect and how to manage any discomfort.

Can I pay for dentures or implants over time?

Yes. We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans, subject to eligibility. Figures published as at September 2026, confirm when you book.

Do implants have to be taken out for cleaning?

No. Dental implants are fixed in place and do not need to be removed for cleaning and maintenance, which is one of the practical differences people notice most compared with a removable denture. They still need daily cleaning and regular professional review.

Will I need a bone graft before an implant?

Possibly. Implants need adequate bone density in the jaw to support them securely, and where that is lacking, bone grafting surgery may be required first. This adds time and cost, and an oral and maxillofacial surgeon assesses whether it is necessary.

Why has my denture become loose?

Usually because the gums underneath have shrunk. The gums, lips and cheeks change over time, and this becomes particularly noticeable after about five years with the same denture. A reline refits the denture to the current shape of your gums, which is why we recommend periodic refitting rather than waiting for the fit to fail.

Who performs the surgery, and who looks after me afterwards?

A specialist performs all surgical components of the treatment. Your initial consultation, aftercare and ongoing maintenance are with a general dentist at your Core Dental practice, so routine care stays with the team you already see.

Related services and further reading

Dentures

Implant-retained dentures

Dental implants

Maintaining your dentures

Permanent denture options: pros and cons

Options to replace a missing tooth

Geriatric dental care

All about dental implants

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, offer interest-free payment plans and claim from private health funds on-site with HICAPS.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online via coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm (Bayside Saturday 8.30am to 1.30pm), Sunday closed
Clinics	Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside , Glenferrie

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

What does a denture consist of?

A denture is a removable prosthetic device that replaces missing teeth and lost gum. It has a plate or framework holding artificial teeth, made from acrylic or cobalt chrome. Core Dental dentists can make partial, full, over- and immediate dentures.

What types of dentures does Core Dental offer?

We discuss four main types: partial dentures, full dentures, over-dentures that fit over teeth, roots or implants, and immediate dentures placed on the day of extraction. Your Core Dental dentist recommends one after examining your mouth.

What is a dental implant made of?

A dental implant is a small titanium post placed into the jawbone. Over time it integrates with the bone and supports a crown, bridge or denture. Our dentists assess your bone and general health before suggesting implants.

How often should dentures be replaced?

Dentures commonly need replacing about every five to seven years as the artificial teeth wear and the gums shrink. Your Core Dental dentist checks the fit at regular visits and may suggest adjustments or relines in between.

How should I clean and store my dentures?

Clean dentures daily, take them out at night and store them in water or a denture cleaning agent. Your Core Dental dentist can show you how to clean them and your gums, and will advise what suits your type of denture.

Is surgery needed for dentures?

No. Dentures rest on the gums and do not need a surgical procedure, though teeth that cannot be saved may need extracting first. Implants do involve surgery. Your Core Dental dentist explains which steps your treatment would involve.

Can I spread the cost of dentures or implants at Core Dental?

Yes. We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans such as Payright, over 3 to 30 months for plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility. Figures published as at September 2026, confirm when you book.

How do I book a denture or implant consultation at Core Dental?

Call 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au. Mention your missing teeth and any health conditions or medicines, and we will arrange an examination at one of our nine clinics so your dentist can explain your options.