



# Healthy Smiles for a Healthy Lifestyle

By Dr. Jeff Haddad

## New Technologies Make Dental Implants Faster and Easier for Patients

Did you know that dental implants are frequently the best treatment option for replacing missing teeth? Rather than resting and moving around on the gum line like removable dentures, or using adjacent teeth as anchors like fixed bridges, dental implants are long-term replacements that your dentist or oral surgeon can provide you. Unfortunately, some patients are hesitant because they fear a big surgery or complications in the procedure. Cone Beam 3D technology is putting these patients' fears to rest.

Digital radiographic imaging has become one of the most important components in today's dental practices, and the most important new imaging technology to emerge in the dental industry during the past decade is cone beam 3D computed tomography, or CBCT. CBCT imaging for the maxillo-facial region enables dentists, oral surgeons, and orthodontists to use three-dimensional imaging as a critical diagnostic and treatment planning tool.

Statistics show that 69% of adults ages 35 to 44 have lost at least one permanent tooth to an accident, gum disease, a failed root canal or tooth decay. Furthermore, by age 74, 26% of adults have lost all of their permanent teeth. Twenty years ago, these patients would have had no alternative but to employ a fixed bridge or removable denture to restore their ability to eat, speak clearly and smile.

Fixed bridges and removable dentures, however, are not the perfect solution and often bring with them a number of other problems. Removable dentures may slip or cause embarrassing clicking sounds while eating or speaking. Of even greater concern, fixed bridges often affect adjacent healthy teeth, and removable dentures may lead to bone loss in the area where the tooth or teeth are missing. Recurrent decay, periodontal (gum) disease and other factors often doom fixed bridgework to early failure. For these reasons, fixed bridges and removable dentures usually need to be replaced every seven to 15 years.

### What is a Dental Implant?

Today there is another option for patients who are missing permanent teeth. Rather than resting on the gum line like removable dentures, or using adjacent teeth as anchors like fixed bridges, dental implants are long-term replacements that are surgically placed into the jawbone. Composed of titanium metal that "fuses" with the jawbone through a process called "osseointegration," dental implants never slip or make embarrassing noises that advertise the fact that you have "false teeth," and never decay like teeth anchoring fixed bridges. Because dental implants fuse with the jawbone, bone loss is generally not a problem.

### How long do they last...and does it hurt?

After more than 20 years of service, the vast majority of dental implants first placed by dentists and oral surgeons in the United States continue to still function at peak performance. Dental Implants have a 97% success rate after 10 years compared to 50% success rate of a fixed bridge. More importantly, the recipients of those early dental implants are still satisfied they made the right choice. If properly cared for, dental implants can last a lifetime.

The procedure has been significantly simplified in recent years due to 3D Cone Beam technology. After your dentist obtains a 3D image of the area, they can place the necessary number of implants many times without using a scalpel or sutures! Patients leave the office needing nothing more than over-the-counter anti-inflammatory drugs in most cases.

### Am I a Candidate for Dental Implants?

This is a great question, because there are some situations where a dental implant is not the best option for patients. In our office, we like to have a consultation with the necessary X-rays to help to determine if a patient is a good candidate for this procedure. At that point we will determine if using 3D Cone Beam technology is appropriate to help us in this planning process. It is because of the predictability of this technology that allows some patients the opportunity to have dental implants who have been previously been told in the past that they were not good candidates.

## Dental Tip of the Month:

***Does have a missing tooth or teeth bother you? Are your dentures hurting or uncomfortable to eat with? Is your quality of life being affected from tooth loss? My recommendation is if you are curious about if dental implants are appropriate for you, then take the time to schedule a consultation with either your dentist or another that places dental implants. Information is power! This may be a dental procedure that could change your life that you never realized was possible for you.***



*Jeffrey S. Haddad D.D.S. completed his dental education at the University of Michigan in 2001. Dr. Haddad is a fellow of the prestigious Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies. He lectures nationally on cosmetic dentistry, TMJ disorders, and practice management.*

*Dr. Haddad and Dr. Doolin lead a practice of 10 that focuses on cosmetic, implant and neuromuscular dentistry, as well as general dentistry for children and adults. For more information, please visit [www.rochesteradvanceddentistry.com](http://www.rochesteradvanceddentistry.com) or call (248) 656-2020.*