

Editorial Note on Periodontics and Prosthodontics- Dental Implantology

Dr. Raluca Cosgarea

Department of Periodontology, Operative and Preventive Dentistry, University of Bonn, Welschnonnen str 17, 53111, Bonn, Germany

***Corresponding author:** Dr. Raluca Cosgarea, Department of Periodontology, Operative and Preventive Dentistry, University of Bonn, Welschnonnen str 17, 53111, Bonn, Germany; Tel: +0091 9961512933; E-mail: drhbyms@gmail.com

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Editorial

Dental implant surgery is a procedure that replaces tooth roots with metal, screwlike posts and replaces damaged or missing teeth with artificial teeth that look and function much like real ones. Dental implant surgery can offer a welcome alternative to dentures or bridgework that doesn't fit well and can offer an option when a lack of natural teeth roots don't allow building denture or bridgework tooth replacements.

How dental implant surgery is performed depends on the type of implant and the condition of your jawbone. Dental implant surgery may involve several procedures. The major benefit of implants is solid support for your new teeth — a process that requires the bone to heal tightly around the implant. Because this bone healing requires time, the process can take many months.

Because dental implants require one or more surgical procedures, you must have a thorough evaluation to prepare for the process, including a:

- **Comprehensive dental exam:** You may have dental X-rays and 3D images taken, and have models made of your teeth and jaw.
- **Review of your medical history:** Tell your doctor about any medical conditions and any medications you take, including prescription and over-the-counter drugs and supplements. If you have certain heart conditions or orthopedic implants, your doctor may prescribe antibiotics before surgery to help prevent infection.
- **Treatment plan:** Tailored to your situation, this plan takes into account factors such as how many teeth you need replaced and the condition of your jawbone and remaining teeth.

Causes

Dental implants are surgically placed in your jawbone, where they serve as the roots of missing teeth. Because the titanium in the implants fuses with your jawbone, the implants won't slip, make noise or cause bone damage the way fixed bridgework or dentures might. And the materials can't decay like your own teeth that support regular bridgework can.

- In general, dental implants may be right for you if you:
- Have one or more missing teeth
- Have a jawbone that's reached full growth
- Have adequate bone to secure the implants or are able to have a bone graft
- Have healthy oral tissues
- Don't have health conditions that will affect bone healing
- Are unable or unwilling to wear dentures
- Want to improve your speech
- Are willing to commit several months to the process
- Don't smoke tobacco

Risk factors

- Infection at the implant site.
- Injury or damage to surrounding structures, such as other teeth or blood vessels.
- Nerve damage, which can cause pain, numbness or tingling in your natural teeth, gums, lips or chin.
- Sinus problems, when dental implants placed in the upper jaw protrude into one of your sinus cavities.