

**Ryan M. Jenkins, DMD**  
Board Certified Periodontist & Dental Implant Surgeon  
*Diplomate, American Board of Periodontology*

## Top 25 FAQ's about Dental Implants

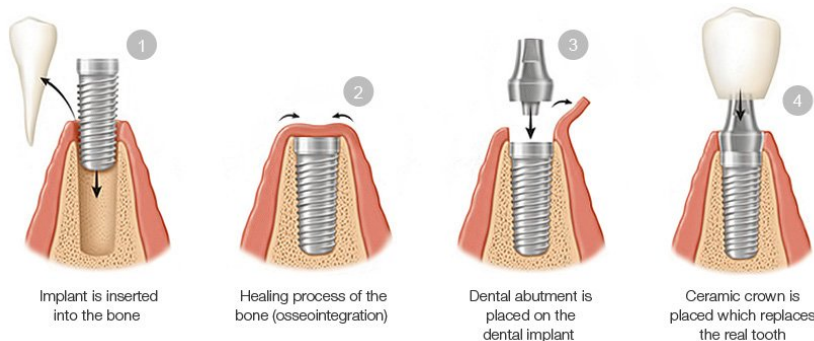
Dr. Ryan M. Jenkins is a board-certified periodontist and dental implant surgeon as well as a Diplomate of the American Board of Periodontology. Dr. Jenkins practices in Littleton, Colorado and is the owner of Littleton Implants & Periodontics, PLLC. For more information about Dr. Jenkins and his credentials, please click here for his bio:

<http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/about-our-periodontics/our-periodontist-dr-ryan-jenkins>

Also, please visit our website for general information or questions regarding all services provided by Dr. Jenkins <http://littletonimplantperio.com> or call us at (303) 797-1211.

### What are dental implants?

- Dental implants are used to securely replace missing teeth. Implants stay fixed into your mouth and look, feel, and function similar to natural teeth. The dental implant consists of 3 parts:
  - o Implant—The implant itself is a titanium screw that will act as the root for your new artificial tooth. The implant is surgically inserted into the jawbone and will fuse with the jawbone over time.
  - o Abutment—The abutment is a connector that will connect the implant to the artificial tooth.
  - o Crown—The crown is the artificial tooth that screws or cements onto the abutment. Crowns are usually made of porcelain and zirconium for aesthetic purposes.
- For more information and educational videos about dental implants, click here <http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/dental-implants> or call our office at (303) 797-1211 to schedule a consultation with Dr. Jenkins.



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## Why choose dental implants over other types of teeth replacement?

- Dental implants are the ideal choice to replace teeth. They stay fixed in your mouth and look, feel, and function very similar to natural teeth. Most importantly, replacing missing teeth with dental implants will help retain the jawbone. With other teeth replacement options, bone loss will occur, which will lead to changes in your facial profile and accelerate the aging process, ultimately making you look older. Dental implants help to avoid this process, keeping you looking younger.
  - o Compared to a bridge, implants are easier to clean and feel more natural. Additionally, the adjacent teeth do not need to be ground down and damaged to support the restoration.
  - o Compared to a removable full or partial denture, implants are fixed and much more stable. You will have the confidence to eat whatever foods you want as well talk to people without worrying about a bulky prosthesis falling out.
- For more information and educational videos comparing dental implants to other teeth replacement options, please click here <http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/dental-implants/tooth-replacement-options> or call our office at (303) 797-1211.

## Are all implants the same?

- No, it is important to choose an implant from a highly reputable manufacturer that has many years of research and long-term studies. These implants may be a little more costly, but it is important to choose a premium quality implant to be placed into your body. Dr. Jenkins chooses to place Straumann implants, as they are the leaders and innovators in the field of dental implants. Choosing premium implants, such as Straumann, helps to increase the rate of success and reduce the rate of failures and future complications. There are hundreds of different implant manufacturers in the market, many of which attempt to replicate the technology from the well renowned manufacturers. However, most of these companies do not have long-term success studies, and their implants are usually cheaper. When it comes to selecting a dental implant, you definitely get what you pay for. Always choose a premium product to be placed into your body.

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## Can dental implants help secure and stabilize my dentures?

- Yes, depending on the amount of bone available, Dr. Jenkins can place between 2-8 implants per arch to either help stabilize your existing dentures or replace them with a full arch fixed prosthesis. Common names for these prostheses are implant supported overdentures or fixed hybrids.
  - For more information and educational videos about how dental implants can support your dentures, click here on the following two links:  
<http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/dental-implants/implant-supported-overdenture>  
<http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/dental-implants/missing-all-upper-or-lower-teeth>
- To schedule a consultation, you can call our office at (303) 797-1211.

## Who should perform my dental implant surgery?

- To obtain the best surgical care and most successful outcome, it is important to choose a surgical specialist, such as a periodontist, for your treatment. By choosing a specialist, you will benefit from the most advanced surgical procedures for dental implants, which will be customized to your needs. There are only 2 surgical specialties recognized by the American Dental Association: Periodontal surgeons and oral and maxillofacial surgeons. Advanced surgical techniques involving dental implants are best understood and performed by periodontists and oral surgeons who are board-certified by the American Board of Periodontology or the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. As periodontists are the experts in the tissues that surround and support the teeth and implants, periodontists possess the most relevant skills in order to achieve the best surgical and aesthetic outcomes regarding dental implant surgery. Dr. Jenkins is a board-certified periodontist and a Diplomate of the American Board of Periodontology.
- Regardless of whom you choose to place your implant, it is imperative to ask the right questions before make your final decision. Always trust your care to a board-certified surgeon.
- For more information on why you should choose a board-certified periodontist to surgically place your implant, click here  
<http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/patient-information/why-choose-periodontist>

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## Who makes the abutment and the crown?

- This step will be completed by your general dentist once the implant has healed in the bone (about 3 months). This usually will require your dentist taking an impression and sending it to the lab. After a few weeks, you will return to your general dentist for the final abutment and crown try in and delivery. Dr. Jenkins will work with your general dentist and inform him/her when the implant will be ready to have the final restoration completed.

## Is dental implant surgery painful?

- During the procedure, the area will be numbed with local anesthetic. You may feel a little pressure during the implant placement process, but no pain. Minimal to moderate pain and discomfort is normal once the anesthetic has worn off after surgery, however, Dr. Jenkins will prescribe you pain medications to help manage any pain you may have. Typically, patients recover quickly and return to their normal daily routines the day after the procedure.

## How long does the implant surgery take?

- For single implant cases, it can take as little as 30-45 minutes. For more complex and multiple implant cases, it can take a few hours.

## Can I be sedated?

- Yes, Dr. Jenkins offers IV sedation and nitrous oxide for patients with dental phobias or just want the procedure to be as comfortable as possible.
  - o IV Sedation—Medications are administered through an IV, and you may drift in and out of sleep throughout the procedure. We will also administer oxygen and keep a close eye on your vitals the entire time. A specialized anesthetist, who is trained and licensed to perform IV sedation, will administer and monitor the sedation. You will likely not remember any of the procedure and may have difficulty remembering the rest of the day. Please note that if IV sedation is administered, you will need someone to drive you home.

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- Nitrous Oxide—Nitrous oxide or “laughing gas” is delivered through a mask placed over your nose. This will induce a feeling of detached calm, easing your fears and keeping you relaxed. You will be awake with this option.

## How long will recovery take?

- For most cases, you can return to your normal daily routine the next day. It is recommended to postpone any exercise or elevated physical activity for a few days in order to prevent bleeding and swelling. For more advanced cases, it may be a good idea to have a couple of days off afterwards for a more comfortable recovery. In either case, you will be prescribed antibiotics, pain medications, and a prescription strength mouthrinse to manage any post operative discomfort.

## How long does the implant need to heal?

- Once the implant is placed into the bone, it will require on average about 3 months to heal in the bone. This process is called osseointegration. Sometimes if the bone quality is poor or if additional bone grafting is done at the time of implant placement, a longer healing period may be needed. In this case, the implant will be “buried” under the gum tissue, and once it has healed, a small secondary procedure to expose the implant will be needed. Once the implant and the bone have fused together, your general dentist will make the final abutment and crown for you.

## What if I need a tooth extracted first?

- First, the tooth will need to be removed. Dr. Jenkins will perform the surgical extraction and place a bone graft at the same time in order to prevent bone shrinkage during healing. This is also called extraction with ridge preservation. After this procedure, the bone graft will need 4 months to heal. A specialized 3D imaging scan, known as a CBCT scan, will then be taken to determine if there is enough bone present to place the implant. If enough bone is present, then the implant can be placed. If not, additional bone grafting may be needed.
- For more information and educational videos about extractions and bone grafts, please click here <http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/implants-periodontics/dental-extractions-ridge-preservation> or call our office at (303) 797-1211 to schedule a consultation with Dr. Jenkins.

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## Why do I need a bone graft?

- Studies show that if a bone graft is not placed during tooth extraction, the bone will shrink up to 50% in the first 6 months. If there is not enough bone, a dental implant cannot be placed. The purpose of the bone graft is to preserve as much bone as possible in order to place an implant. If an implant is not placed within a year of the extraction and bone graft, the bone will start to shrink again. In a small amount of cases, additional bone grafting may be needed after the 4 month healing time if the CBCT scan shows that the bone is still deficient.
- For more information and educational videos about extractions and bone grafts, please click here <http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/implants-periodontics/dental-extractions-ridge-preservation> or call our office at (303) 797-1211 to schedule a consultation with Dr. Jenkins.

## Will I have a replacement tooth during healing?

- This is completely up to you. Usually, a temporary tooth is made by your general dentist to replace front teeth in the upper jaw for esthetic purposes. If the missing tooth is a molar or in the lower jaw, a temporary tooth is usually not needed. The most common temporary is called a “flipper.” This is a removable prosthesis that will replace the missing tooth. Sometimes, your dentist may be able to bond a temporary tooth to the adjacent teeth. You will need to speak with your general dentist to decide on what will be the best option for your case.

## Can I have the implant placed at the same time as the tooth extraction?

- Sometimes. This procedure is called immediate implant placement. However, this cannot be completed in every extraction case. There are a number of factors that will determine if immediate implant placement can be completed. Many cases are not candidates for immediate implants, usually due to bone loss, bone defects, and soft tissue defects. Dr. Jenkins will determine if you are a candidate for immediate implant placement.



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## How long until I get the final replacement tooth/teeth?

- One aspect of dental implants that you may want to prepare yourself for – It's a process, not just a procedure. Sometimes, there can be several stages of surgery with a few months of healing time between each stage. You will need to be prepared to dedicate some time in order to place and restore your dental implants. A typical implant case involves first extracting a hopeless tooth and placing a bone graft. 4 months of healing is needed before the implant can be placed. Once the implant is placed 4 months later, the implant will need an additional 3 months to heal in the bone before your general dentist can make the crown. Once you are ready for the crown, it may take about a month with your general dentist for impressions, lab fabrication of the abutment and crown, and final delivery of the implant crown. In total, this process will take a minimum of 7-8 months. If your case is more complex and more bone grafting procedures are needed, the process may take even longer. However, the final result will be well worth the wait.
- For more information and educational videos about dental implants, click here <http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/dental-implants> or call our office at (303) 797-1211.

## How long do dental implants last?

- Dental implants are a very successful procedure when completed by a surgical specialist, such as a periodontist, with a success rate around 95%. Once the implant has healed and been restored, they can last for a very long time. However, there are factors that can affect the success and longevity of an implant, such as uncontrolled medical conditions, smoking, poor oral hygiene, poor compliance, excessive biting forces, or implant surgery completed by an inexperienced clinician. The key factor to long-term success is excellent oral hygiene and frequent cleanings by your general dentist and periodontist. If the implants are not kept clean, they may develop a condition known as peri-implantitis, which is gum disease around an implant. This condition is difficult to treat. Over time, peri-implantitis will result in progressive bone loss around the implant and eventual implant failure/loss. To avoid developing gum disease around dental implants, it is important that the implants be kept clean with daily brushing, flossing, water-flosser use, and at least 2 professional cleanings a year with your dentist and periodontist. If the implant does not heal properly initially, becomes loose after a period of time, or develops severe bone loss, the implant will need to be removed. After the site heals, another implant can usually be placed.

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## What are the common complications?

- The most common complication initially is early implant failure. This is most likely due to poor quality of bone, heavy smoking, or excessive forces being placed on the implant during the early healing stage. In this case, the implant will need to be removed and the site allowed to heal. Once healed, another implant can be placed.
- The most common complication once the implant has healed and been restored is peri-implantitis. The key factor to long-term success is excellent oral hygiene and frequent cleanings by your general dentist and periodontist. If the implants are not kept clean, they may develop peri-implantitis, which is gum disease around an implant. This condition is difficult to treat. Over time, peri-implantitis will result in progressive bone loss around the implant and eventual implant failure/loss. To avoid developing gum disease around dental implants, it is important that the implants be kept clean with daily brushing, flossing, water-flosser use, and at least 2 professional cleanings a year with your dentist and periodontist
- Other less frequent surgical complications include but are not limited to bleeding, sinus complications, and possible nerve complications (especially in the lower jaw). Dr. Jenkins utilizes 3D imaging technology to help minimize these surgical complications.

## Does smoking affect dental implants?

- Yes, smoking decreases the success rate of dental implants from 95% to around 80%. However, implants can still be placed if you do smoke. Dr. Jenkins will work with you to help improve the success rate of your dental implant if you smoke or have a history of smoking.

## Is there an age limit for dental implants?

- No, a dental implant can be placed on any patient that is healthy and will benefit from the surgery. For younger patients (teenagers), implants cannot be placed until the jawbone is finished growing. This can extend into the early 20's for some patients. An x-ray of the growth plates can be taken to determine if the patient is finished growing before placing implants.



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## What is a CBCT scan?

- A cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) scan is an advanced 3D scan that allows the surgeon to evaluate the amount of bone available for dental implants, as well as identify important anatomical structures to help increase the success of the dental implant surgery and decrease the risk for complications. Dr. Jenkins utilizes the CBCT for all implant cases.
- For more information about the CBCT, please click here  
<http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/dental-technology/cone-beam-ct>

## What is guided implant surgery?

- This is an advanced and innovative surgical approach to implant surgery utilizing 3D imaging and computer software planning. With the use of a CBCT scan, Dr. Jenkins can digitally plan your implant surgery on computer software. A special surgical guide is then made and used during surgery to transfer the pre-planned digital implants on the software into your mouth. Special surgical kits are used for this procedure. This method is used in more advanced or aesthetic cases in order to optimize the surgical success and final aesthetic outcome of your case.
- For more information about guided surgery, please click here  
<http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/dental-technology/guided-surgery-dental-implants>

## What is “All on 4”?

- The “All on 4” procedure is a general term describing the replacement of the entire upper and/or lower jaw with only 4 implants. In some cases, only 4 implants are sufficient, however this procedure can include placing between 4-8 implants per arch. A full set of teeth will then be anchored onto these implants. This prevents you from needing an implant for each individual missing tooth. All you will need are these strategically placed implants on the upper and/or lower arch and you will have a full set of beautiful teeth.
- For more information and educational videos about “All on 4”, please click here  
<http://littletonimplantperio.com/littleton/dental-implants/missing-all-upper-or-lower-teeth>

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## How much does it cost?

- Every treatment plan is different, and cost will vary depending on a number of factors such as if extractions or additional bone regeneration procedures are needed, how many implants are placed, etc. Additionally, Dr. Jenkins uses the top of the line implants (specifically Straumann), biomaterials, growth factors, and advanced technology to optimize surgical success. Every plan will be customized to fit your needs. Our treatment coordinator will review your customized treatment plan prior to your procedures.

## Does insurance cover dental implants?

- Insurance plans are extremely variable from plan to plan. Most dental insurance policies are limited when it comes to dental implants, and often only pay for a portion of the procedure, if at all. Our insurance coordinator can check with your insurance plan to see if there is any coverage for dental implants. You will be responsible for the remaining balance of what the insurance does not cover.

In addition to implant placement, extractions, bone grafts, and sinus grafting, Dr. Jenkins also provides many other surgical procedures in his office. These services include cosmetic gum surgery known as aesthetic crown lengthening, gum recession treatment, treatment of gum disease, and others. Please visit our website at <http://littletonimplantperio.com> for more information about Littleton Implants & Periodontics, PLLC and the surgical services we offer. Thank you.