...IMPLANT RETAINED DENTURES?

Q What are dental implants?
A A dental implant is a small screw made of titanium, which is a metal which the body easily accepts. The dental implant is inserted into the bone of the jaw, and over time the jawbone integrates with the implant surface, firmly anchoring it. Under normal conditions, the healing process can take as little as 6 weeks. After this time, a crown, bridge, or denture is secured to the implant. Implants are a reliable and ideal solution if teeth are lost as a result of disease or an accident or if teeth are congenitally missing.

Q Are implants safe? How long will they last?
A Implants are a well-established, tried-and-tested treatment. This treatment option is backed by several decades of scientific research and successful clinical use. As a result dental implants may be just the tooth replacement solution you are looking for. Specific to Straumann implants, long term studies confirm a success rate of over 95% after 10 years. Careful treatment planning, proper implant placement, regular follow-ups with your dentist, and good oral hygiene are all significant factors that influence the long term success of your implant.

Q I have some of my own teeth. Can I still have implants?
A Yes. You can have any number of teeth replaced with implants – from one single tooth to a complete set.

Q Can implants always be used to replace missing teeth?
A It depends on the condition of the bone in your jaw. Your dentist will arrange for a number of special tests to assess the amount of bone still there. If there is not enough, or if it isn’t healthy enough, it may not be possible to place implants without grafting bone into the area first.

Q Do implants hurt?
A Placing the implants requires a small operation. This is usually carried out using local anaesthesia. You will not feel any pain at the time, but you may feel some discomfort during the week following the surgery. This is usually due to having stitches in place, and the normal healing process. It is

Q Can I have the new teeth straight away?
A No. The implants need to bond (integrate) with the bone after they have been placed. If you are having one, two or three teeth replaced, you will have a temporary restoration in the meantime. If you have complete dentures, then you can wear them throughout the healing period once they have been adjusted after the surgery.

Q How long does treatment take?
A Under normal conditions, the post surgery healing process can take as little as 6 weeks. After this time your denture is secured to the implant. It can sometimes take up to 12 months from the initial assessment to the time when the artificial teeth or dentures are finally attached to the
implants. Treatment time depends on how complicated your situation is. Your dentist will be able to give you a timetable once the surgery has been done.

Q  **If I had gum disease when I had my own teeth, will I get it with the teeth attached to the implants?**

A  Just like natural teeth, implants require regular check-ups and conscientious oral hygiene. Much of the success of dental implant treatment depends on keeping your new teeth clean and plaque-free. So, if you keep them clean, then dental implants are the ideal solution for replacing your missing teeth.

Q  **Can I take the teeth out if they are fixed to implants?**

A  If you have complete dentures fixed to the implants by bars, then you'll be able to take them out for cleaning.

Q  **Do the implants show?**

A  Your dentist will make sure that the implants won't show during all normal movements of the mouth and lips.

Q  **What happens if the implant does not bond (integrate) with the bone?**

A  This happens very rarely. If the implant becomes loose during the healing period or just after, then it is easily removed and healing takes place in the normal way. Once the jaw has healed, another implant can be placed.

Q  **How much does an implant cost?**

A  Since each patient has different needs and priorities, dental implant treatments and the corresponding costs differ as well. You will receive a cost estimate from your dentist when he decides what treatment is right for you. Some of the factors that influence the cost are:

- The number of implants needed
- Additional procedures that may be necessary to enhance the look and feel of your facial expressions.

Normal dentures often mean you are unable to eat or speak well, due to movement of the dentures. But teeth attached to an implant don’t cause this problem.

Implant retained dentures utilising 2 implants and a high impact denture cost around £3000.

Q  **Where do I get this treatment?**

A  Prodental refers patients to see Dr Paul Stone in Perth Royal Infirmary. Paul is a respected and experienced implantologist. Paul was the immediate past president of the ADI Association of Dental Implantology UK. He uses the Straumann implant system, which is the most widely used dental implant system in the world with over 3 million implants placed.

If you are unhappy with any of the answers then do ask for a second opinion. You will be spending a lot of time, effort and money so you must be sure that you know what you are getting at the end of treatment.
Q  What tooth replacement solutions are available?

A Fixed Solution

Implant retained dentures

Text and illustrations taken from www.straumann.com