

TOOTHFULLY. *speaking*



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Dental Implants - Questions You Should Ask!

Anyone considering replacing a missing tooth/teeth should be told the first choice is a dental implant - in most cases. As dental implants are becoming more mainstream, there are some simple yet vital questions to be answered in your best interest:

BRAND - the analogy is the car industry. Some car brands and models have a better or worse reputation for longevity, reliability, pricing etc. Similarly, there are over 600+ implant manufacturers and in much the same way, some are better than others. The scientific studies based on one brand's success rates DOES NOT transfer to other brands. They are not all made of pure titanium, nor have the same design, or the same success rates! So definitely ask your dentist if the implant they are suggesting is of the top 10 brands in the world, most being manufactured in Europe or the States. There are many knockoff implants similar to the fashion industry!

RECORD - once you have an implant placed, make sure you have a copy of all the parts/pieces used in your case (serial numbers). This ensures that if you break or chip a portion of your crown or bridge it is easy for another dentist to find the right replacement parts. If you are traveling or move to another city, do not assume, from an x-ray, anyone can tell which brand of implant is placed - again very similar to car parts. Getting a knockoff on a car part may work but do you want this when it comes to your oral health? What happens if the knockoff does not fit well? You could lose your implant - not a worthwhile risk.

FOUNDATION - the single most important thing about the success of your implant is to confirm that you have adequate foundation into which an implant is placed. Not only that - you actually need 50% more bone. In framing a house, when the carpenter screws into wood - think how much more supporting wood there is in a 2 x 4 - not just the bare minimum! The same goes for bone. If an implant is screwed into just enough bone, then the implant is stripped, just like a screw with threads exposed. In bone, if implant threads are exposed, implants eventually fail. Titanium implants must be completely in bone. If there is not enough bone, then it must be built up first or added at the time of placing the implant. Most implants need bone grafting either before or during placement because taking out the teeth results in a lot of bone shrinkage and loss.

You must pose three questions to your dentist about: 1) do I have 150% more bone than the implant size needed? 2) what brand of implant is it? What science is there about that particular brand? 3) can I get a copy and serial number of the parts you have used just in case I move or am traveling and something happens?

These few suggestions are a result of issues my colleagues and I have seen in our practices these days and are meant to alleviate future issues for others in a similar predicament. If in doubt, talk to your dentist or get another opinion.



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