ADA Flip Guide to
Dental Implants

• Benefits of Implants
• Replacing a Single Tooth
• Implant-Supported Bridges
• Implant-Supported Dentures
• Building Up Bone
• Peri-Implantitis
• Caring for Implants

ADA American Dental Association®
America’s leading advocate for oral health
The single tooth implant replaces the missing tooth’s root. A single tooth implant is a stand-alone unit and does not involve treating the teeth next to it.
Bone Grafting

Building Up Bone to Support Implants

If there is not enough bone to support the implant, bone can be added by a process called **bone grafting**. If needed, bone substitutes — either synthetic or natural — can be placed under the gums. Over a period of about 8-12 weeks, these materials replace missing bone and can stimulate new bone growth. Your dentist will tell you if more bone is needed.

- **Before**
- **Bone substitute is placed**
- **Treatment area is protected**
- **After**
If your dentist has recommended implant treatment, **consistent and good oral hygiene is very important for the success of the implant.**

You must spend time caring for the implant and making sure the area around it is very clean. If not, you increase your risk of problems, like gum disease, which can weaken the bone and tissues needed to support the implant.

Clean around the implant and your natural teeth every day with floss or another between-the-teeth cleaner. This helps remove food and plaque from areas a toothbrush can’t reach. If you have trouble holding floss, a special floss threader can help you reach and clean around the implants. Your dentist may also recommend special types of floss or other between-the-teeth cleaners based on your personal needs.

Using a floss threader, insert floss under the bridge. Gently rub the side of each tooth next to the bridge with the floss, cleaning under the gum too. Rub the floss from side to side along the underside of the pontic.

Flossing picks, sticks or brushes can help clean around implants.