

## After Care and Maintenance Instruction for Implants.

It is important to remember that implants are not 'fit and forget'. Your implants have to be regularly monitored. Provided they are properly looked after and maintained they will give many years of trouble free function.

On completion of treatment it will be necessary for you to attend recall appointments to check the condition of the implants and adjust the bite if required. After this, regular six monthly appointments should be made as normal for dental examinations. Failure to keep these appointments may result in bone loss and damage or even loss of the implant. It is also important that you inform the surgery immediately should you detect any mobility or loosening of your implant. As you age your bite changes, natural teeth are able to adapt to these changes but implants need adjusting to the new bite position. Sometimes the small screws which help retain the teeth become loose, due to heavy or abnormal biting. This is an easy matter to rectify if caught early as it entails retightening the screws and adjusting the bite or removing the cause of the loosening. Failure to attend early will result in possible fracture of the screw or even worse, damage to the implant.

Your oral health depends on the health of your teeth and gums. Plaque is a film of bacteria that builds up on the implant and tooth surfaces. Although the gum tissue around the implant is fairly resistant to infection, you should still keep your regular hygiene appointments, as a build of plaque will cause problems and possible bone loss from around your implant resulting in eventual loss. If it is not removed regularly, plaque may harden to create a deposit on the tooth and implant surface, known as tartar or calculus. Once formed, this can only be removed by a hygienist. If it is not removed then it may result in eventual tooth and implant loss.

If you have teeth and implants mixed together it is also very important to maintain the health of the natural teeth. Should the natural teeth be lost, the remaining implants may be damaged by the extra-work load. In order to protect and reduce the loading on the implants it may be necessary to insert additional implants to replace the missing teeth. If you have had a denture made to fit over your implant, it is still important to have regular hygiene visits. The denture may require replacing every three years. Failure to do this by adjusting or remaking the denture will place extra work load on the implants, which could result in their eventual loss or breakage. If you have an over- denture that is held onto the implant by mechanical clips, then these too will need to be periodically replaced due to wear and tear following normal function.

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