

IMPLANT AFTERCARE FACTSHEET

The Role of the Hygienist

The Hygienist is critical in implant maintenance and we hope the following information gives you a better insight into what the Hygienist is assessing when you visit them:

1. **Interview.** The Hygienist will begin by asking you several questions: e.g. “How does the implant feel? Do you notice any bleeding or pus when you brush your teeth? Do you have any bad taste around the implant? Do you have any pain?”
2. **Tissue evaluation.** The Hygienist will evaluate the tissue surrounding your implant(s) for color, tone, texture, inflammation, redness, bleeding, mobility and pus.
3. **Scaling:**
 - Implants surrounded by healthy tissue don’t require scaling, but a light polish using a fine polishing paste and rubber cup is appropriate.
 - Where the tissue is unhealthy (deep pocket depth with bleeding or pus), we use a cavitron tip, especially designed for implant maintenance, on low power.
 - After the polish, we may use an irrigating syringe with chlorhexidine gluconate or Floss soaked in chlorhexidine around the implant. Betadyne can also be used as an irrigant in patients who are not allergic to iodine.
4. **Home care instructions.** The Hygienists will review the steps of implant care with you. Our view is that implants need to be maintained aggressively: Daily flossing is essential along with twice daily brushing. (Electric or sonic toothbrushes are OK only a week or two after the implant is restored.)
5. **Documentation.** The Hygienist will help to ensure that even the slightest symptoms can be identified to minimize potential future problems and that these can be brought to your Dentist’s attention.

In addition, regular 6-monthly check-ups with your dentist will assess and monitor gum attachment and underlying bone support for your Implants as well as monitor the health of the rest of your mouth.

Cirencester Dental Implant Practice

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Frequently Asked Questions

What must I remember for taking care of my Implants?

Basically: care for implant-supported crowns or bridges in exactly the same way as your natural teeth. This means thorough brushing twice a day and cleaning the spaces between your teeth once a day. An extremely important point for implants is to keep the emergence positions of the implants from the gum clean. It is best to clean these areas in the evening with a fine interdental brush.

How can I care for removable dentures?

If you wear a denture on your implants, you should not only clean the denture but also the attachment components emerging from the gum twice a day with the toothbrush. And this is important: clean all around the connection to the jaw with a fine interdental brush.

Why is it so important to keep these emergence areas clean?

Bacteria in food residue and plaque can penetrate the gum and bone particularly easily at these points. This causes inflammation, which in the worst case may cause implant loss.

Can I also clean the emergence points with dental floss?

You can certainly do that. However, if you pull the dental floss quickly back and forth there is a danger that you might injure the gum. Interdental brushes are gentler, safer and more efficient. The Hygienist can show you how to use the small brushes correctly.

What is the purpose of a Hygienist clean?

When you have your teeth professionally cleaned, specially trained Hygienists remove hidden and hard dental plaque that you cannot remove with your toothbrush or interdental brush. They also thoroughly polish the surfaces of your teeth to make it more difficult for plaque deposits to form.

What toothbrush is right for me?

After healing is complete it is best to use a medium soft toothbrush with rounded and bundled bristles. Hard or low quality toothbrushes, particularly when pressed hard on the teeth, may cause the gum around the implants – and also around the natural cervix of the tooth – to retract. It is best to ask your Dentist/Hygienist to recommend the right toothbrush and the right brushing technique.

Can I use an electric toothbrush?

Electric toothbrushes are no better or worse than a normal toothbrush. If you are used to an electric toothbrush and can use it correctly, there is no reason why you should not use it for your implant-supported teeth.

Do you recommend a dental water jet?

There are different opinions about this. On one hand a dental water jet has a good cleaning effect; on the other hand if the water jet is too powerful it may injure the gum and actually push bacteria under the gum. If you have not previously used a dental water jet, you should not really start using one with implants.

Can I use Whitening Toothpaste with implants?

If you frequently use toothpaste with large abrasive particles it may roughen the surface of your new crowns, which will make it easier for plaque to form. In addition, abraded surfaces will discolor faster. You should select a standard toothpaste without a whitening effect for daily use.

Is mouthwash suitable?

Mouthwash is good for rinsing your mouth after snacks or for refreshing your mouth during the day. Some products may also help with inflammation. But be careful about self-medication: if you have gum problems for several days in succession or if your gum bleeds when you brush your teeth, you should make an appointment with your dentist.

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