



YOU'VE DECIDED ON DENTAL IMPLANTS. NOW WHAT?



**By: Steven D. Spitz, DMD
Prosthodontist/Dental
Implant Specialist**

The decision to invest in your health and specifically your dental health can be overwhelming. There is quite a bit to consider: the investment of time and finances, the change in personal dental habits, and how the dental changes can affect your life in the future. Dental implants are one of the most favorably predictable procedures in dentistry today. We have concrete evidence that supports the fact that dental implants are safe and can actually advance the current state of an individual's health who has dentures or is living without teeth. Once you have decided that dental implants are right for you, there are questions to ask of your doctor and to know personally before your consultation.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR DOCTOR(S):

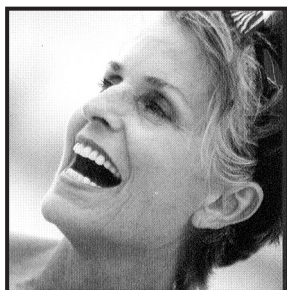
There are two phases to dental implant treatment; surgical and restorative. In most cases, two specialists work together for treatment. An oral surgeon or periodontist usually completes the surgical procedure, and the restorative or prosthetic phase is created by a prosthodontist and in some cases, a general dentist.

In select areas demographically, prosthodontists have the education, training, and experience to surgically place as well as restore the implant. In these cases you are working with one specialist from the planning stage through to the completion. Ask your prosthodontist if this is the case.

When working with either one or two specialists, find out:

1) Does the surgical specialist use one type of implant in all cases or do they have training to select from a variety of systems based upon the physiological indications? Every implant case is different; from the bone structure, location of where the implant will be placed, what surrounds the implant site, and more. It is important to have the experience, ability, and flexibility with different systems to make immediate changes if necessary.

2) Is the implant brand(s) nationally available? As you may relocate throughout the years, knowing the exact brand, manufacturer, size, etc. of your implants will allow you to maintain your implants throughout the years with ease. Your doctor will have this information in your medical records.



Confidence begins with a great smile.

3) What is the cost of the treatment plan and what is specifically included in the cost? The financial agreement should include three parts; the surgical aspect (which may include the removal of teeth, bone regeneration, and implant placement), the temporary phase (the type of prosthesis to be used during the healing process), and the prosthetic treatment (crowns, bridges, dentures, etc.). Are x-rays, models, surgical guides, etc. included?

4) How will your implant treatments be treatment planned? Do you want teeth in a day, or is waiting 3-6 months an option? Will the implant be placed in one stage or two and will

the tooth or teeth be placed immediately? With this in mind, there are a variety of implant systems currently being used. Discuss with your doctor what type of system will be best for you.

5) What type of sedation is available for any and all stages of treatment? There are a variety of sedation options available. Nitrous Oxide, Valium, conscious oral sedation, IV sedation, and general anesthesia are all options.

When working with two specialists, find out:

1) Which specialist is planning the treatment? The recommendation is to have the prosthodontist plan the treatment and coordinate with the surgical doctor for the specific placement of the implant(s).

2) How are the specialists coordinating your case? Do they communicate personally via phone or written communication? Do they share x-rays and other records? How much experience do they have working together?

3) Does your restorative specialist have experience restoring the type of implant being placed? There are many companies that create dental implants. Each brand or manufacturer has different properties. It is important to make sure that your restorative dentist has experience with the specific implant being placed in order obtain the restorative results you desire.

When working with your restorative specialist, discuss:

1) The type of prosthetic treatment to be planned. Have the end result in mind when starting; are

you interested in having your prostheses fixed or removable? Do you want single crowns, a bridge or denture? Do you want to plan your treatment in phases for financial purposes? What are the options available?



2) The financial guidelines of your treatment. Dental implants are expensive. It is a long-term investment in your overall health, especially your dental health. Having an idea of your financial parameters will guide both you and your dentist in planning the treatment you desire.

3) The type of temporary treatment will be used during the healing phase. While your implant is healing, you will want to have some type of temporary prosthesis in place of the missing teeth. There are a variety of options available, each with various benefits and costs. This is important to discuss before the surgical phase of your treatment, so that if you are working with two specialists, you can arrange to have the temporaries at the surgical office before your appointment.

With the right information and a little extra insight to your treatment, your results, as well as your experience, can be fantastic.

For more information or to schedule a consultation, please contact Dr. Spitz at 617-437-1060.

Publisher's Note

I recently had some work done on my teeth by Dr. Spitz, and nobody has ever gone to such efforts to make me feel as comfortable and relaxed. He genuinely cared about my entire well-being rather than simply going through the motions to get me out of the chair as quickly as possible. If you are as nervous as I am about seeing the dentist, I highly recommend seeing Dr. Spitz for your next appointment.

Steven D. Spitz, DMD is the proprietor of Smileboston Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry in Boston, a Prosthodontist and a dental implant specialist. Dr. Spitz, co-founded the Institute of Advanced Laser Dentistry and co-invented the Perfect-Fit™ Laser Implant Surgical Guide (patent pending). He has lectured nationally and internationally on the advanced applications of lasers and implant dentistry. At the 2004 World Clinical Laser Institute symposium, Dr. Spitz received the "Award for Leadership and Outstanding Contributions in Advancing Dentistry Through Laser Technology."

Dr. Spitz has the ability, education, and training to complete the surgical and aesthetic phases of dental implant treatment. Having been trained surgically in the placement of various types of dental implants and as a Prosthodontist has allowed Dr. Spitz to treat individuals that have been told dental implants will not work for them.

Dr. Spitz, who treats all facets of dentistry, welcomes your questions.

Office: 617 437 1060

Email:

Smileboston@verizon.net

Website:

www.smileboston.net

