

12 Secrets About Dental Implants They Don't Tell You

Introduction

Are you considering dental implants but unsure where to start? Dental implants are a life-changing solution for missing teeth, but many patients don't fully understand the process, costs, or long-term implications. At Middleton St George Dental Care, we believe in transparency and want to ensure you're fully informed before making this important decision.

In this guide, we'll reveal 12 secrets about dental implants that most clinics don't tell you upfront, empowering you with knowledge that will help you make an informed choice about your oral health.

Secret #1: Not All Dental Implants Are Created Equal

There's a wide range of dental implants on the market, and not all of them offer the same level of quality. The materials used and the skill of the dentist placing them play a crucial role in the success of the implant. At Middleton St George Dental Care, we place Straumann implants – a Swiss company that have been making implants since 1974 and produce high-quality, clinically proven implant systems to ensure durability and compatibility with your body.

Secret #2: The Skill of Your Surgeon Matters More Than You Think

Getting dental implants isn't just about the implant itself—it's about who places it. The experience and expertise of the surgeon are key to a successful outcome. Complications often arise due to poor placement, which can result in implant failure, discomfort, or aesthetic issues. Our experienced team prioritise precision and patient safety in every procedure, including the routine use of microsurgical techniques for better healing. As of 2024, we have placed over 1000 implants at the practice.

Secret #3: Dental Implants Aren't a One-Size-Fits-All Solution

While implants are an ideal solution for many patients, they aren't suitable for everyone. Factors like bone density, gum health, and overall oral hygiene must be assessed to ensure the implant has a stable foundation. If your jawbone isn't strong enough, you may need additional treatments, such as bone grafts, before an implant can be placed. At Middleton St George Dental Care, we provide a comprehensive evaluation to determine if you're a good candidate and if there are any additional procedures that would be of benefit.

Secret #4: Implants Can Last a Lifetime, But Only With Proper Care

Dental implants are marketed as a “permanent” solution, and while they are designed to last a lifetime, this isn’t guaranteed and certainly not without proper oral care. Regular brushing, flossing, and professional cleanings are still essential to maintain the health of your gums and prevent issues like peri-implantitis (inflammation around the implant). Our hygiene team will guide you on how to care for your implants to ensure their longevity.

Secret #5: Recovery Takes Time - More Than You May Think

While some dental clinics advertise "same-day implants," the truth is that full recovery can take months. After the implant is placed, it takes time for the bone to fuse to the titanium post in a process called osseointegration – this usually takes 3 months but in some cases may take longer. Rushing this process can lead to complications. At Middleton St George Dental Care, we prioritize healing and comfort, maximising the chances that the implant has integrated before proceeding with any restorations. We do carry out “same day teeth” cases where the implants and teeth are placed in the same visit, but these require a lot of time planning to make sure that the chances of success are optimised.

Secret #6: The Process Involves More Than Just the Implant

When you think of dental implants, you might picture the replacement tooth—but the process involves multiple components. The implant itself is a titanium post that’s surgically placed in your jawbone. Once healed, for a single tooth a custom-made ceramic crown is made to complete the process. Multiple implants can also be placed to support rows of fixed teeth (bridges) or to dramatically improve the stability of dentures. Each of these stages requires expert care, which is why we manage every step in-house for continuity and precision.

Secret #7: You May Need a Temporary Prosthesis

During the healing phase, especially for front teeth, you may need a temporary prosthesis (a removable denture or temporary bridge) to fill the gap until your final implant is ready. This can be an important part of the process to maintain your smile’s aesthetics and functionality. We will always ensure you are informed about all of the available options.

Secret #8: Some Implants Require Bone Grafting

Not everyone has sufficient bone density to support an implant. In cases where bone loss has occurred due to infection, injury, or gum disease, a bone graft may be necessary to rebuild the jawbone. While this adds time and cost to the procedure, it’s essential for long-term success. At Middleton St George Dental Care, we perform bone grafts with cutting-edge microsurgery techniques to ensure you have a strong, healthy foundation for your implant.

Secret #9: Dental Implants Can Prevent Further Bone Loss

One of the key benefits of dental implants that is often overlooked is their ability to prevent further bone loss in your jaw. When a tooth is missing, the jawbone begins to deteriorate over time because there's no root to stimulate bone growth. An implant acts like a tooth root, helping to stimulate the bone and preserve your bone structure reducing changes to your facial appearance.

Secret #10: There Are Financing Options Available

Many patients assume that dental implants are prohibitively expensive, but there are often financing options available to make the procedure more affordable. At Middleton St George Dental Care, we offer flexible payment plans and financing solutions to ensure that the cost of dental implants doesn't prevent you from receiving the care you need. We are yet to meet a patient who has regretted having dental implants placed!

Secret #11: Implants Have a High Success Rate, But There's Always a Risk

Dental implants have a success rate of around 95%, but it's important to understand that no medical procedure is 100% successful. Factors such as smoking, underlying health conditions (for example poorly controlled diabetes), and poor oral hygiene can increase the chances of implant failure. We take the time to discuss these risks with our patients and provide personalised care plans to minimise them.

Secret #12: Regular Follow-Ups Are Essential for Long-Term Success

Once your implant is placed, it's not a "fit and forget" situation. Even if you have no natural teeth at all, regular assessments are still crucial to ensure the implant remains stable and that the surrounding gums and bone stay healthy. We schedule follow-up appointments, typically every 12 months, to monitor the health of the tissues around the implant and provide follow-up treatment as required, giving you peace of mind that your implant is functioning perfectly.

Conclusion: Choose an Implant Provider You Can Trust

Dental implants are an investment in your health and well-being. With the right provider, they can transform your smile and improve your quality of life. At Middleton St George Dental Care, we're committed to providing you with all the information you need to make a confident, informed decision about your treatment. And remember a 5-year guarantee is standard on all our dental implant treatments (though some exclusions apply in rare cases).

If you're ready to explore dental implants or have any questions about the process, we're here to help. Contact us today for a consultation, and let us guide you toward the perfect solution for your smile.