



## Periodontics and Implants

What is periodontics?

Periodontics is a subfield of dentistry focusing specifically on treatment of inflammatory disease of the gums and the supporting structures of the teeth. Periodontists are able to diagnose, prevent, and treat periodontal (gum) disease in addition to the placement of dental implants. Periodontal disease can be difficult to detect, and can often not cause pain until advanced stages of the disease. It can be prevented by proper daily dental hygiene practices such as brushing and flossing as well as by seeing your dentist for regular cleanings twice per year.

What are implants?

Dental implants are a relatively recent but well-developed form of treatment that significantly revolutionized dental healthcare. Dental implants replace missing teeth, whether they are missing because of disease or an accident. Implants are surgically placed in the jawbone to replace the root of the tooth, which is the portion of the tooth below the gums. Implants can be used to replace a single tooth or multiple teeth, or even to support a full set of dentures. Implants offer several aesthetic and functional benefits to the patient. Implants help restore a beautiful smile by filling in the gaps from missing teeth, preventing the shrinking of the jawbone that occurs when a tooth is lost, and offer a strong secure fit for dentures that increases patient comfort. If they are taken care of, implants can last a lifetime.

How do I know if I should see a periodontist?

You should see a periodontist if you have signs of periodontal (gum) disease or you need implants. Periodontal disease is caused by an inflammatory reaction to bacteria under the gums. Some symptoms of periodontal disease include:

- redness, swelling, or tenderness of the gums
- bleeding when flossing, brushing, or eating
- gums that are pulling away from the teeth, making the teeth appear longer than before
- pus, sores, or persistent bad breath