

*Ask your  
Dentist!*

*“What are  
dental bridges  
& implants?”*



Because your teeth are meant for life, it's important to have a complete set for proper speaking and chewing. Missing teeth can cause unnatural wear on adjacent teeth and can affect the way you talk, eat and smile. For that reason, replacing a missing tooth or teeth is important. Two methods of restoration are Dental Bridges and Dental Implants.

### *What's a Dental Bridge?*

A bridge involves one or more false teeth that are permanently held in place by surrounding healthy, natural teeth. Fitting you with a Dental Bridge begins with your dentist filing and shaping the surrounding teeth. A dental laboratory prepares the Dental Bridge to fit into the space your dentist has prepared. Fitting and placing the Dental Bridge can take several appointments with your dentist or a dental specialist called a Prosthodontist.

### *What's a Dental Implant?*

A Dental Implant is a substitute for your natural tooth root. A small, metal post takes the place of the root and provides a place to attach an artificial tooth, or in some cases, a group of artificial teeth over a number of implanted posts.

Either your family dentist or a dental specialist will assess your overall condition and discuss what options are available to you. If you are in good overall health, you have good oral health and the bone in your jaw is strong enough to support a Dental Implant, it may be presented to you as a treatment option. Your dentist may refer you to a specialist for the initial placement of the implant.

Placing a Dental Implant takes a number of dental appointments. The process begins with surgically inserting the implant into the jaw. Once the bone and the implant have firmly fused together, a replacement tooth is constructed and fitted into place. A completed Dental Implant will look, feel and function like a natural tooth.

### *How do I care for a Dental Bridge or an Implant?*

Dental bridges and implants need to be cared for like your natural teeth - with regular brushing, flossing and dental checkups. If you have a Dental Bridge, your dentist will show you how to use a special "floss threader" to make certain you're cleaning in and around it.

### *Are Dental Bridges and Implants permanent?*

Your natural teeth are the most permanent option for a lifetime of smiling, chewing and speaking. However, if keeping a natural tooth is not possible, Dental Bridges and Dental Implants are both long-lasting solutions that should provide years of trouble-free service if they are cared for.



Information courtesy of  
your dentist and  
the Nova Scotia Dental Association  
[www.healthyteeth.org](http://www.healthyteeth.org)