

## Options for Replacement of a Single Missing Tooth

When missing a single tooth, there are a number of methods by which it can be replaced. These are listed below with an explanation of techniques, advantages, and disadvantages.

### I. FIXED PORCELAIN FUSED TO GOLD BRIDGE

The abutment teeth or supporting teeth on either side of the space are prepared into a peg shape to receive crowns or “caps”. The false tooth or pontic is joined to the crowns, such that the bridge is permanently cemented into place as a single unit.

#### Advantages:

1. With this type of bridge, a plastic temporary bridge can be temporarily cemented at the time of the extraction so that there is no need to be wearing a removable temporary plate (“flipper”) that covers the palate while waiting for the extraction site to heal (2 to 3 months).
2. The shape and colour of the abutment teeth can be altered since they will be prepared for crowns with a porcelain veneer.

#### Disadvantages:

1. The enamel of the abutment teeth is removed in preparing these teeth into the required peg shape.



Tooth preparation for porcelain fused to gold bridge.



Porcelain fused to gold bridge in lower posterior area.

## II. PARTIAL COVERAGE OR MARYLAND TYPE BRIDGE

This bridge is similar to the one described above, but the abutment teeth are only partially prepared on the inside surface with the addition of small grooves and ledges. Metal pads or “retainers” hold the false pontic tooth in position.

### Advantages:

1. This technique is such that the abutment teeth receive a more conservative preparation compared to the conventional porcelain-fused-to-gold bridge. The fronts of the teeth are left untouched.
2. The Partial Coverage bridge is permanently cemented into place and there is no display of the metal unless the bridge is replacing a back tooth.

### Disadvantages:

1. Following extraction of the problem tooth, the patient will need to wear a “flipper” acrylic removable plate or retainer for approximately 3 months.



Before.



Tooth preparations.



Cemented bridge (tongue view).



Cemented bridge (frontal view).

### III. IMPLANT AND PORCELAIN FUSED TO GOLD CROWN

If the adjacent teeth have had few or no dental restorations, then patients are often reluctant to have them prepared in any manner to act as abutments for bridgework. The success rate of implants is now very high, although not 100%. Esthetic porcelain-fused-to-gold crowns or all porcelain crowns can be placed over the implant to replace the missing tooth. Pamphlets and educational materials are available from our office on the nature of the titanium implant.

#### Advantages:

1. No preparation of the abutment teeth.
2. The implant will help to preserve bone and gum at the site of the lost tooth.
3. The implant crown acts like a single tooth and therefore flossing and cleaning is easier.
4. Often the implant can be loaded immediately with a temporary acrylic crown

#### Disadvantages:

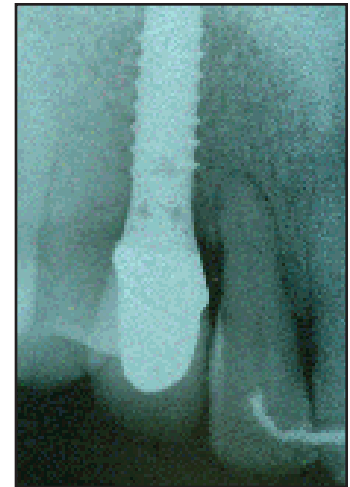
1. The patient might have to wear a “flipper” type partial plate after the extraction and during the time of the implant treatment.
2. The time is longer (from 3 months to 6 months).
3. The cost is more.

#### Cost:

Fees for placement of the implant by Dr. Bridger, or an oral surgeon range from \$1800.00 to \$2500.00. Dr. Bridger’s fee for the crown over the implant ranges from \$1500.00 to \$2,000.00 depending on the complexity of the case. If a flipper denture or temporary acrylic crown is required to replace the missing tooth during the healing phase of the implant, the fee is \$450.00- \$650.00. Thus, the total fee could vary from \$3300.00 to \$5,150.00 depending on the complexity.

The insurance companies have been sporadic in their coverage of either the implant or the crown over the implant, since these procedures are relatively new and have not been negotiated with the various policyholders.

**Please Note:** We would be happy to provide you with more detailed information, perform insurance pre-determinations, and answer any questions you may have. Please refer to our website for more information on implants. [www.drbridger.com](http://www.drbridger.com)



Before



Implant site.



Implant crown inserted.