



Walter J. Jung, D.D.S., PC

Dental Implants- Creating Smiles and Confidence

Smile and the world smiles with you. These familiar words encompass not only a facial expression, but an attitude. A person who smiles appears friendly. A person who smiles is perceived as happy, and others want to share in that happiness. A person who smiles is considered beautiful. A person who smiles appears confident, self-assured, approachable. Many of us may want to smile, to be that person who attracts others, but because of the condition of our teeth, we are embarrassed. We lack self-confidence. We find ourselves covering up our smiles.

At first, Walter J. Jung, D.D.S. had no great ambitions to become a dentist, but a friend

decided to attend dental school, and Jung agreed to join him. Through the course of his education, first at Ole Miss and then at the Meharry Medical College's School of Dentistry in Nashville, Jung became interested in the aesthetic side of dentistry—dentistry that gives people confidence, that makes them feel beautiful, that allows them to smile. Drawn to this area of dentistry, Jung attended Metropolitan Nashville's General Hospital for training in oral and maxillofacial surgery from 1996 to 2000. Once his training was complete, he moved to Baton Rouge to be near his family and opened his own office on Bluebonnet—Southern Louisiana Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery.

"I like helping people," he explained. "This area of dentistry is more difficult than traditional dentistry, but it is interesting because it improves the well-being of my patients."

Through Dental Implantology, a new branch of dentistry, Dr. Jung is able to reconstruct missing teeth and

their supporting structures with natural or synthetic substitutes. A dental implant is an artificial titanium fixture that is placed surgically into the jawbone to substitute for a missing tooth and its roots. Implants are non-allergenic and very compatible with body tissue. Dental implants are used routinely in hundreds of clinics and hospitals worldwide and are sought after because they provide comfortable, permanent, and attractive tooth replacements as an alternative to removable dentures and conventional bridges.

"Many times you cannot tell the difference between an implant and a real tooth," said Dr. Jung. "Some of my patients are very young and lose a tooth in a car accident. It always feels great to see them regain their confidence, to see them smile again. I get tremendous gratification from seeing so many of my patients so pleased with their implants."

Dental implants are normally considered when there are missing teeth, painful and loose dentures, and for irreparable teeth. While there are risks and concerns with any dental procedure, results of implant treatment are excellent today. Implants have improved the quality of life and helped restore the oral health of millions of people around the country.

Implants bond biologically to living bone tissue (called osseointegration), and once united

with the bone, they support teeth firmly and safely. They restore function and aesthetics to normal levels, making eating, talking, and chewing no longer painful. Implants also prevent progressive bone atrophy and shrinkage, while preserving bone levels and youthful facial appearances.

"When a patient comes to me, we do a work-up for an implant," said Dr. Jung. "There is coordination between the patient's restorative dentist and myself. The actual surgery to place the implant usually lasts one hour. Then there is a three-month healing process in which the patient is monitored while the bone fuses with the implant still located underneath the gums. Once that has taken place, we uncover the implant, and a crown is placed on the post. There is some mild discomfort occasionally during the healing process, but most patients just take an over-the-counter pain reliever for a few days. They don't complain of much discomfort."

While some dental insurance does not cover this procedure, the Southern Louisiana Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery center does have payment options available. The cost of a dental implant is usually about the same as the cost to have a three-unit bridge placed, but dental implants have proved to be better for oral health as the teeth on either side of the implant are not destroyed like when a bridge is placed. And most companies guarantee implants for a lifetime!

While Dr. Jung specializes in making people beautiful again, he is also an expert in maxillofacial trauma, including facial lacerations, intra-oral lacerations, avulsed (knocked out) teeth, fractured facial bones, and fractured jaws. "Injuries to the face, by their very nature, impart a high degree of emotional as well as physical trauma to patients. The science and art of treating these injuries requires special training involving hands-on experience and an understanding of how the treatment will influence the patient's long-term function and appearance," Dr. Jung said.

TMJ treatment, removal of impacted teeth, wisdom teeth extraction, and orthognathic and reconstructive surgery are other areas of expertise for Dr. Jung, who feels that it is his responsibility to not only treat his patients oral problems, but to make sure that they walk away from his office with a sense of well-being and the self-confidence to smile again.

For more information about dental implants or any other services provided by Dr. Jung and the talented staff at Southern Louisiana Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, please visit www.sloms.com or call (225) 767-7212.

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Can you tell which tooth is an implant?