

Ask The Dentists

Dear Dr. Winter, I have been told I have no bone left under my dentures. I keep getting sharp stinging pain when I bite down and my dentures pop out when I open my mouth even with denture adhesive. What are my options and how much does this cost?

Dear Jan, I am sorry you are having problems with your dentures. Teeth maintain bone. When teeth are removed you can lose 40% of the remaining bone the first year after tooth loss. This bone loss will continue every year until implants are placed to stop bone loss. This means you can lose height of bone and width of bone continuously. When you wear dentures the dentures may appear tight but over time as the bone resorbs the dentures get looser and looser. That is why dentures should be relined or remade every 3-5 years to try and maintain a better fit between the denture acrylic and the bone.

Dentures can move up to 1/2 an inch during a normal chewing cycle. That movement coupled with bone loss can quickly lead to exposure of nerves that can cause pain from denture pressure.

Solutions to nerve pain involve stabilizing your dentures or moving into "fixed" teeth again. This is done by placing implants or mini-implants into the jaws to support your dentures. How many implants you receive is often dependant upon your budget. I have written many articles on Upgradeable Dentistry which is a concept that allows patients to place implants before bone loss occurs. They can then continue to add implants over time as their budgets allow until they have enough support to have a permanent bridge or "fixed teeth." Placing implants as soon as teeth are lost helps prevent more costly bone grafts later on. There are ways of making Snap-On-Dentures with a few implants so that the implants can have attachments that the denture clips to. This prevents slipping of the teeth and eliminates the need for denture adhesive which can be quite annoying to clean out each day. If enough implants can be afforded then a bar can be made to snap the denture on to and this allows the implants to be splinted and increases their strength.

If we have 6 implants in the upper arch (or more) and at least 5 implants in the lower arch then a hybrid



Drs. Richard and Bruce Winter

or "fixed" denture can be made for our patients.

If you have lost too much bone according to your dentist, there may be grafting procedures you can undergo to add bone for supporting implants. That can involve using bone from your chin (chin block grafts), bone from your ramus (the area by your wisdom teeth), or using hip grafts to re-grow the bone. Alternatively, ridge spreading or bone reduction can be undertaken to try and create a platform that will allow implants to be placed.

We welcome our readers to come in for a no charge implant consultation or a comprehensive examination and implant evaluation to see what your options are for eliminating denture pain. Please see our videos, photos and articles at www.hamptondentalassociates.com

We look forward to meeting you! Ask about our internet or Hometown Publication special. Please note any implant case started before 12/10/14 will be given a \$300 discount if you bring in this article.

Sincerely,

Richard B. Winter D.D.S.

M.A.G.D. D.I.C.O.I. D.A.B.O.I./I.D.

Master Academy of General Dentistry

Diplomate International Congress of

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Diplomate American Board of Oral Implantologists

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