



## CARING FOR YOUR DENTAL IMPLANTS

Welcome to the exciting world of dental implants! You can enjoy the benefits of your new teeth for years to come—if you take care of them properly. Your dentist, periodontist, and dental hygienist have carefully developed a treatment plan tailored to your needs which will help ensure long term success of your implants and appliance. Now that your surgical treatment phase is complete and the implant has been placed, you are the most important member of the implant team.

Here Are Some Important Points to Remember:

**Basic is Best:** Basic hygiene is the best hygiene. Brushing and flossing every day after each meal are very effective in controlling plaque accumulation. Use a toothbrush with a soft to medium bristles and a toothpaste approved by the American Dental Association. Regular flossing, with standard dental floss like Super Floss, is essential for good oral hygiene. Super Floss is designed for easier threading and is thickened through the flossing area for more effective cleaning and polishing of the implant posts and appliance. It is important to floss all sides of the implant posts and interproximal areas.

**Commitment:** Implant maintenance is a commitment. Inconsistent maintenance can, over time, lead to serious complications, as is often the case with natural teeth. In addition to regular brushing and flossing, there are special tools which will help you care for your implants. Special brushing devices like the proxabrush or an automated toothbrush will complement regular brushing. Special mouthwashes and rinses can also help control bacteria.

**The Proxabrush** is designed to clean narrow spaces your regular toothbrush can't reach. It is shaped to allow the bristles to slip between your appliance and the gum line, cleaning the exposed implant post, the underside of the appliance, and stimulating the gum tissues.

Another way to control the level of plaque is by using **antibacterial mouthwashes or rinses** like **Periodex**. Dip a proxabrush or a Q-tip into a small cup of the Periodex and apply directly to the implant surface and surrounding tissues. **(Do not use any other mouthwash unless directed by your dentist.)**

**Be Gentle:** Always be gentle with your implants. Though made of metal, implants can be scratched, which then provides a breeding ground for bacteria. Use only brushes with a rounded and flexible bristles. **Never use metal probes or scalers on your implant.** You do not need to use extra force when brushing your implants. Excessive force may scratch the implant post or irritate the gum and surrounding tissues.

**We're Counting on You:** Remember, the success of your dental implants now depends on you. If you follow the instructions of your periodontist, dentist, and hygienist; and maintain good oral hygiene, your implants will allow you to eat, speak, laugh and smile for many years. If you have any questions about the information explained here, ask your dentist, hygienist, or periodontist.