

# Dental implants: a replacement for missing teeth

**N**adine Cline was looking toward her future. “About 10 years ago I had a lot of dental work done,” recounts the retired first-grade teacher. “I had several bridges placed, which was very expensive, but unfortunately the results were unsatisfactory. Some of the teeth supporting the bridge began to loosen and abscess. “So recently I had to decide whether to have removable, partial dentures or implants.”

Nadine says she spent a significant amount of time researching dentists in the Melbourne area who placed dental implants, and every time she explored further one name came to the top of her list: Clark F. Brown, Jr., DDS. Dr. Brown is a comprehensively trained and experienced dentist who has practiced cosmetic, general, and implant dentistry in Melbourne for over 28 years.

“I went ahead and scheduled an appointment with him,” remembers Nadine, “and from the first time I entered the waiting room, I felt comfortable. Staff members greeted me warmly, and everything was very calm and seemed to flow smoothly.

“Then when I met Dr. Brown, I couldn’t believe how nice he was. He and his entire staff were both personable and professional.”

## Personal and professional

“During my first consultation with a new patient, I take a medical history,” describes Dr. Brown. “Then we go over the types of problems the patient may be having and the goals he or she wants to achieve. A patient with dentures may want to get rid of them altogether or may simply want the dentures comfortably secured. A patient with missing teeth may want a fixed bridge or may prefer implants.

“Of course, we take x-rays, which enables me to see how much bone a patient has, and then we sit down together and discuss how we can reach his or her goals. We discuss what we can achieve, other options, and the cost and time involved.

“We spend enough time with our patients so that they can make educated decisions.”

“By the time I left that first consultation, I had been given a thorough explanation of my options, an estimate of the expenses involved, and a timetable for the procedures,” remembers Nadine appreciatively.

According to Dr. Brown, Nadine was missing a number of teeth in the back on both sides and on the upper right side.

“When someone loses a tooth, a number of things can happen,” points out Dr. Brown. “If there are surrounding teeth, they will begin to drift and collapse into the space of the missing tooth. Also, bone tends to shrink and collapse, which can create future problems for dentures or implants.”

Dr. Brown explains that Nadine had three options. “Her first option was to do nothing,

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Nadine, a retired first-grade teacher, recognizes compassion when she sees it, and she says she found it at Dr. Clark Brown’s office.



Dr. Brown is well known for his kind, gentle, and professional manner.

Clark F. Brown, Jr., DDS, is board certified by the American Board of Oral Implantology/Implant Dentistry. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of California, San Diego, and his doctor of dental surgery degree from Georgetown University. Dr. Brown served as a dentist in the U.S. Air Force from 1978 to 1981. He has been in private practice in Melbourne since 1981. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Oral Implantology/Implant Dentistry, International Congress of Oral Implantologists, American Society of Osseointegration, and American College of Forensic Examiners and is a fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry and International Congress of Oral Implantologists.

ing, which would have resulted in a greatly diminished chewing ability and consequential pressure on her front teeth that were never meant to do heavy chewing.

“Her second option was removable partial dentures. They would have required removal for cleaning, and with the number of teeth that were missing it would have been difficult for a partial denture to stay in place.

“Nadine’s third option was for us to place implants, which is as close as we could come to replacing her own teeth. Implants look, chew, and feel like natural teeth.”

Implants also stimulate the bone, causing it to strengthen and grow.

Following her consultation, Nadine decided to have implants. “This time I wanted something permanent. I’m retired, and I didn’t want to think about being 95 years old and dealing with dentures.”

## Permanent implants

A dental implant is an artificial replacement for the root of a tooth. The implant provides a foundation on which permanent teeth or removable teeth can be securely attached. Implants can prevent deterioration of the bone beneath the gums, which helps maintain the fullness of the face and provides a good bite. They are a great option for patients who want to improve their dental health.

“The first stage is to place the implants,” educates Dr. Brown. “These implants

are made of titanium, which is an extremely biocompatible material. It is a strong substance that has the ability to actually bond to the bone.”

This process is called *osseointegration*.

“At times we can place an implant and immediately place a tooth over it. The success rate of that procedure is less than if we let the implant heal first, especially if the tooth is in the back where it will be subjected to a lot of pressure,” informs the doctor.

During the placement of implants, the tissue over the implant site is opened to expose the bone. A recipient space is created in the bone to the exact shape of the implant, and the implant is then placed into the bone. The tissue is repositioned and secured with sutures.

“I had five implants placed at the same appointment,” says Nadine, “and I was very comfortable throughout the entire procedure. I was given the choice between having IV sedation or just going with a local anesthetic, and I chose the local. Even so, I felt no pain whatsoever. I was fine.

“And to my amazement, following the procedure, I received a beautiful bouquet from Dr. Brown and his staff. I thought it was a very compassionate gesture.”

Once the implant and bone have fused, which takes approximately four months, the top of the implant is uncovered, and replacement teeth are attached to the implants.

Dr. Brown determines the number, position, and direction in which to lay the foundation with dental implants to maximize success. He also works carefully with each patient to achieve the desired design and aesthetics of the replacement teeth. Because Dr. Brown performs both the surgical placement of implants and the design of the restorations, the possibility of miscommunication between the implant surgeon and the restorative dentist is eliminated. He knows exactly how the placement of the implant is done for each patient and why.

“My new permanent teeth are great,” observes Nadine. “I just wish I’d had it done years ago.

“I’m going to suggest to my daughter that she change dentists now so that if she ever needs to have this type of work done she’ll already have just the doctor who can do it!” **FHCN**—Kris Kline

## Here for you...

Dr. Brown looks forward to meeting the readers of Brevard Health Care News. For additional information or to schedule an appointment, please call (321) 259-9429. The office is located at 2113 Sarno Rd. in Melbourne.

For more information, please visit [www.drimplant.com](http://www.drimplant.com).