

THE WHOLE TOOTH...AND NOTHING BUT THE TOOTH

DENTAL IMPLANT FELLOWSHIP AWARDED

Local Dentist Dr. John H. Knight, Jr. of Charlottesville received his fellowship in the International Congress of Oral Implantologists (ICOI) in a ceremony held at NYU in New York City on December 8, 2012. The awarding of fellowship status is an honor which a professional society such as the ICOI bestows on a Dental professional involved in Dental Implant treatment.

"Dental Implants are in many instances the best thing we as Dentist can do for our patients who are missing one or more natural teeth" states Dr. Knight. "When a person loses an adult tooth, there is a tremendous negative impact on the health of the remaining bone, adjacent teeth and patient". "After a tooth is removed the bone in that area will begin to melt away or atrophy". This process will continue throughout a person's lifetime.

The tooth root is located below the gum tissue and supported by bone. The natural tooth root provides stimulation to the surrounding bone that in turn stimulates our bone to make new bone. When the tooth is removed the bone cells in that area think they are retired and will not continue to make new bone. This is one reason why patients experience bone loss in their mouth. The Dental implant in essence replaces the root of the tooth. The Implant provides natural stimulation of bone which stimulates our body to produce healthy bone cells.

After the placement of the Dental Implant a period of time is allotted to allow the Implant to integrate or become firmly anchored in the bone. This process varies from patient to patient but in general 3 to 6 months is allowed. After this period of healing a crown is attached to the Implant. The crown is the replacement of what you and I see in our mouths. It looks like,

acts like and functions like a tooth.

One important factor in evaluating each patient for a Dental Implant is the quality and quantity of remaining bone available. Dr. Knight's office utilizes a 3-dimensional cone beam Digital imaging system to evaluate each patient's upper and lower jaws where Implants are being planned. "One critical step in helping to ensure Implant success is to first determine exactly where you want the final crown to be located". "Our team always plans each patient's case with the end result in mind". "From the beginning we envision the most ideal location to place the implant based on where we want the tooth to be". "Additionally, we thoroughly evaluate each patient's bone through 3D-imaging". "This helps ensure success for each of our patients", states Dr. Knight.

In addition to using Implants to replace missing single teeth Dr. Knight's team uses Implants to restore patients who are missing all of their upper or lower teeth. Patients who have either partial or full dentures will continue to lose bone over their lifetime. The partials and dentures replace the missing teeth but there is no benefit to the patient's bone. As a matter of fact a full upper or lower denture can quicken bone loss through a condition called alveolar atrophy. The denture actually puts forces on the remaining bone which can cause more rapid regression of bone. Over the years this bone loss causes dentures to be ill fitting, uncomfortable and a real source of Dental anxiety for many patients. By placing Dental Implants we can provide a stable support for the patient's denture. This can reduce and often times eliminate the need for denture adhesives and more importantly has a positive impact on a patient's bone and their self esteem. One of the greatest things to hear one of

our patients say is, "It is so nice to be able to eat and enjoy my favorite foods again without being worried about my dentures falling out". Placing 2-4 implants in the lower jaw or 4-6 implants in the upper jaw allows Dr. Knight to secure the denture in place restoring the patients quality of life and their self confidence.



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