

STABILIZE YOUR LOOSE DENTURES WITH MINI IMPLANTS

BY

NORMAN J. POMERANCE, DDS

Many people are faced with the necessity of removing and replacing one or more of their natural teeth. While there are numerous options for replacement, a full or partial removable denture is often the treatment of choice or is the only choice possible for the patient.

In most cases, the denture is fabricated and comfortably fitted ensuring the patient a suitable solution for their condition. However, there are patients who initially are happy with their dentures yet over a period of time become frustrated with the fit, security, stability and comfort of them and there are other patients who have problems adjusting to dentures immediately and have issues regardless of the efforts of their dentists to make them fit more comfortably or securely.

Methods used to improve the fit of dentures can include relines, tightening clasps if they have them, adjusting the bite, cutting back the extensions of the denture or a combination of these procedures. Often, these adjustments result in a comfortable, well fitting, secure and stable denture, but at times, nothing seems to make the denture comfortable or tight enough while eating or speaking. Some patients even have problems just keeping the denture in their mouth due to gagging.

A recent advancement in treatment enables the denture wearer to be more comfortable and secure. If the gums and/or bone has deteriorated to the point that dentures are loose, painful, sore and uncomfortable, this treatment can help. The procedure can be utilized with existing dentures or can be incorporated during the fabrication of new dentures. It involves the placement of four to six mini implants in the anterior area of the jaw in either the upper or lower arch or both.

These implants are made of a titanium alloy and are smaller in diameter than traditional implants. They can be placed and the existing denture altered in one appointment with local anesthesia in less than two hours. The implants have a retentive top on them which engages a metal housing with a rubber o-ring placed in the denture. The implants create

a secure and stable denture immediately and enable the extensions of the denture to be shortened more than would normally be possible, especially the palate of the upper denture if this area causes a gag reflex.

Mini implants are affordable, safe and effective in solving the problem of a loose and uncomfortable denture. They can improve the stability of a denture and bring comfort and confidence back to the denture wearer.