

## What can mini implants do for you...?

Dental implants have been changing the way we look at replacing teeth for the last twenty years. Technology and research have progressed to the point where the use of titanium to anchor tooth replacement appliances has become very common. Two of the biggest hurdles for patients to receive implant treatment are the high cost of conventional implant therapy and the amount of bone each patient may have available to place the implants into. Mini implants can help to solve both of these problems.

What is a mini implant? In almost all current implant systems, the shape of the implant resembles some form of a screw. There are many slight variations, but modern implant designs are basically short, fat titanium screws. The top of the screw has a receptacle so that some type of attachment can be affixed, coming out of the gums. Implants are measured by length (typically from eight to sixteen millimeters) and diameter (typically three to six millimeters across). Mini implants simply have a smaller (usually 1.8 to 2.4 millimeter) diameter. They are "skinnier" titanium screws. Because of this reduction in size, mini implants are often an option where a larger size implant cannot fit.

Because mini implants have a small diameter, the surgery for patients to receive them is less complicated and less invasive. The procedure also requires fewer parts and less time in the dental office. These factors add up to a reduction in cost and make mini implants more affordable.

So how can mini implants help you? The most common way is to retain or stabilize oral appliances such as dentures and partial dentures. Many people are unhappy with their false teeth because they flop around when eating or talking. Mini implants can add stability to an existing denture or partial, often in a single visit. Sometimes, they can be used with your current appliance, avoiding the cost of a new set of teeth.

Mini implants can also be used to support fixed tooth replacements, such as crowns and bridges. A conventional implant is usually the treatment of choice, but there are times when a mini implant does the trick. They can also be used to help move teeth in orthodontics and to provide short term temporary teeth in an emergency.

Everyone's mouth is different, so a trip to the dentist would be required to see if mini implants are an option for you. If they are, you will be amazed at how much a tiny titanium screw can improve your life.

Until next time, keep smiling.

-Please send questions to Drs. Parrish through [www.ParrishDental.com](http://www.ParrishDental.com).