

Cleaning Around Bridges and Implants

1. Single Implants

Implants take the place of your natural teeth. Cleaning around an implant is not too different from cleaning your natural teeth. Even though you won't get a cavity on the implant, your gums and bone around the implant are susceptible to gum recession and bone loss if not taken care of.

What to remember:

- Around an implant, there will naturally be a larger pocket (in comparison to a tooth). It is important that this pocket be kept free of food debris. If you are having difficulty cleaning the pocket, your hygienist can give you additional tips such as using a rubber tip.
- Floss your implant like you would your natural teeth
- Brush in a sweeping motion along the gum line
- If you are having difficulty with a manual toothbrush, you might want to consider an electric toothbrush!

2. Standard (with your natural tooth) or Implant Bridges

Bridges are used to replace missing teeth, however they must be cared for in a slightly different way than your natural teeth.

In addition to your teeth, the tissue underneath the bridge must be kept clean as well. In order to access this tissue and keep it free from debris, your hygienist can show you the following techniques:

- a. **Floss threaders:** used with your traditional floss, a floss threader will allow you to access the space underneath the bridge
- b. **Superfloss:** can be used in place of traditional floss for your bridge. Superfloss is thicker than natural floss and can therefore make it easier to clean large spaces.
- c. **Proxy brushes:** this "tree-shaped" brush is great to use when manual dexterity is limited, or when there are larger spaces that need to be cleaned.