



ETHICAL DILEMMAS OF DENTAL IMPLANTOLOGY

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Abstract: *Dental implantology is one of the most attractive and dynamic fields of work within clinical dentistry. It provides many patients with new and improved opportunities for stable (implant-supported) rehabilitation and also offers dentists a field that is interesting in both technical and economic terms. Adverse clinical outcomes are, however, often the subject of discussion. These relate both to prosthetic failure and to biologic complications and side effects, namely persistent infections surrounding implants. A further point of discussion relates to the question as to how far the triumphant march of implantology is accompanied by a reduction in the willingness to retain teeth. It thus appears all the more important to ask some questions regarding the normative overall conditions of responsible implantologic care on the basis of the present state of research and currently available studies. In line with this, this paper deals with both existing preconceptions and ethically relevant parameters of responsible implantology. These function simultaneously as concrete clinical-ethical guidelines for dentists practicing implantology.*

Key words: *implant, abutment connections, platform switching, platform matching implantology.*

These days it's not uncommon to have a dental implant or for the topic of dental implants to come up during a conversation. According to the American Academy of Implant Dentistry, more than 3 million Americans have existing dental implants. A dental implant is a replacement for a tooth that has been lost, extracted or that never developed. A titanium screw that replaces the tooth root is surgically implanted into the jaw bone and a crown is attached.

The success rate for dental implants is 98%, with 97% of those successful implants lasting for the long term. But in rare cases, complications can occur that may cause an implant to fail. Watch out for these 7 most common dental implant complications.

1. **Loose implant.** Probably the most common complication is an implant that has come loose. There are a number of possible causes for this. In some cases, the jaw bone is not strong enough to hold the implant, perhaps due to bone loss from aging. Other factors can contribute to a loose implant such as smoking, gum disease, and poor oral hygiene. If your implant has come loose, contact an oral surgeon immediately.

2. **Infection.** Another common complication of oral implants is infection. The site of the implant can become inflamed and infected, causing pain and even fever. Infections tend to occur shortly after the implant surgery takes place. Be sure to follow your oral surgeon's



post-op instructions about keeping the area clean, and call us immediately if you see signs of infection.

3. **Bleeding.** In some cases an implant will result in chronic bleeding. When the bleeding won't stop, it can cause all sorts of problems from stomach upset to anemia. In most cases, the bleeding can be stopped with intervention from your oral surgeon while keeping the implant in place.

4. **Micro-movement.** Sometimes implants can shift slightly, or move a tiny amount, referred to as micro-movement. This is not as severe as a loose implant, and you may hardly notice it. Warning signs of a micro-movement include a feeling of tightness in the teeth around the implant, or a shift in the implant you can see when you look in the mirror. This is an early warning sign that the implant might soon become loose. Contact your oral surgeon if you suspect this type of problem.

5. **Allergic reaction.** Most implants are made of titanium alloy. Even though extremely rare, some patients may have an unknown allergy to titanium or another metal. The signs of an allergic reaction include altered taste, tingling, inflammation or swelling in the area. If you do have a titanium alloy allergy, there are alternative materials that can be used. Your implant will simply need to be replaced. If you think you may be experiencing an allergic reaction to your implant, contact your oral surgeon.

6. **Nerve damage.** In some cases an implant is too close to a nerve, causing damage. Signs of nerve damage include numbness or tingling in the tongue, gums, lips, and face. Removing the implant may correct the problem, but it is possible that the nerve damage could become permanent. Your oral surgeon should discuss all of the possible risks of the procedure with you beforehand, including the risk for nerve damage.

7. **Protrusion into the sinus cavity.** In rare cases an implant in the upper jaw could protrude into the sinus cavity. This can cause pain and other complications in the sinuses, as well as an increase in the chances of implant failure.

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