

FILL THE GAP AND SMILE AGAIN

Many people avoid smiling due to feeling self-conscious about missing teeth. Not only can it affect your smile but it also makes eating and speaking difficult. Also functionally it can put a lot of extra load on surrounding teeth.

'Gappy' smiles however do not need to be permanent. Today there are many options available, where in the past dentures were the only answer. Today the **Eastbourne Dental Centre** offers the more advanced techniques of implants and bridges also.

IMPLANTS are the ideal replacement for a missing tooth. It involves the placing of an artificial titanium 'post' into the bone and later placing a crown onto it to imitate the natural tooth.

Not everyone has the ideal bone/jaw structure for this and hence patients' needs to be assessed individually.

The implant is free standing and does not affect the neighbouring teeth. They are very strong, natural looking and have a high success rate.

A **BRIDGE** is the other option offered to fill gaps at The Eastbourne Dental Centre. The bridge fills the gap by using the teeth either side for support to hold the replacement tooth, often by crowning them. The material most often used is porcelain (plus metal as a core) and it creates the illusion of three separate natural teeth when in fact they are bonded together. A bridge will have the added benefit of protecting the teeth either side of the gap if they are already heavily filled.

A bridge like the implant is a permanent/non-removable option.

A **DENTURE** is the other option that is still used on appropriate occasions to fill a gap or several gaps in the mouth. Hence this is the option if there are several gaps on the same jaw or if there is a lack of support for the previously mentioned options.

The denture is fully removable. There are several types of dentures used today. Firstly the *acrylic or 'plastic' denture* which fits on the gums with or without wire clasps and has plastic teeth to fill the gaps. Secondly the sturdier *metal denture* is also a good option and often better long term. It has a chrome cobalt (metal) framework (+clasps, attaching to adjacent teeth) with an acrylic or 'plastic' base and teeth. It is often more exact in its fitting and longer lasting than the full acrylic option.

To find out which treatment option would best suit you and your situation, for all enquires and appointments contact

Eastbourne Dental Centre, cnr Rimu St and Marine Pde, Eastbourne, ph. 5627506.

*** The Dental Centre is pleased to welcome back **Fiona Excell** (nee Coe) after being on maternity leave, she will be practising on a part time basis from early November ***