



THE NEWEST DEVELOPMENT IN DENTAL IMPLANTS -- DENTAL LASERS



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Missing a tooth, for most people, is an awful feeling. Childhood accidents, adult trauma and neglect are three of many reasons for natural teeth failing. Fortunately, the availability of dental implants and its evolution through the years give just about every individual the opportunity to revitalize their smile and their confidence.

What are dental implants?

Dental implants are titanium posts **re-creating the roots of the teeth** on which a crown (single tooth), bridge (multiple connected teeth), or denture is secured. Implants are surgically placed in the bone under your gums. During the healing period, the bone grows around the implant adhering to the post. A replacement tooth, or crown, is then attached to the post, creating a restoration that similar to one's natural tooth. Implants are used as well in securing bridges and dentures when more than one tooth is missing, in both removable and permanent settings.

Substantial progress in implant design, application, and surgical procedures have led to implants being stronger, having expanded applications and healing at an accelerated rate compared to even a few years ago. Implants being the most predictable, long-lasting tooth replacement option that dentistry has to offer, has found a success rate of 90-98 percent.

One such advancement is the use of the dental laser in the surgical placement of implants, eliminating the use of the standard scalpel (and therefore sutures) while reducing and even replacing the need for the dental drill. This advancement offers patients multiple benefits including the ability to forgo anesthetic (no needles), accelerate healing, and enhance the final smile.

What is a Dental Laser (Waterlase Laser)?

Heat, vibration and pressure are the primary causes of pain associated with the use of the traditional dental drill. Since cutting both hard and soft tissues (teeth and gums) with the Waterlase® does not generate heat, vibration or pressure, many dental procedures can be performed with fewer shots, less need for anesthesia, less use of the drill and fewer numb lips! Additionally, using the Waterlase® for gum procedures reduces bleeding, post-operative pain, swelling and the need for pain medication in many cases.
—www.waterlase.com

When using the laser, in many cases anesthetic may not be necessary as it is 'numbing' the area as it is being treated. Furthermore, as the surgical site is minimized without the need of the scalpel and/or drill, the discomfort is as well. Without anesthetic, returning to work the same day following the procedure is viable as there is no residual numbing effect and, as the fear of the needle is relieved, many individuals can get the treatment they need without worrying about 'the shot'.



Accelerated healing is another benefit of placing implants with the laser. Healing begins at the implant site immediately as the procedure is being completed. Traditional methods can be abrasive and affect the tissue it comes in contact with heat and pressure. With the laser, trauma is alleviated, as there is no pressure or heat from friction to the surrounding tissue. Patients, who have had implants placed using both methods, have stated that the main difference following placement using the laser, is the minimal inflammation and discomfort, if any. The laser 'heals' or repairs the site as it cuts, bypassing the inflammatory process, allowing quicker healing and less discomfort.

*"I delayed having the surgery for so many years. My dentist finally persuaded me to try this new laser surgery. It's one of the best decisions I ever made. I smile more every day, and I am no longer afraid of the dentist's chair."
—Rob Braunstein, one of the first patients of this laser dental technique, 2002*

Immediate healing also has an affect on the final aesthetic look and your smile. By changing the actual procedure from scalpel to laser, the final look is more predictable. Traditionally, sutures are used in healing the area following implant placement. This process is eliminated when using the laser. As well, implants placed with the laser can often have the 'tooth' placed immediately, offering the final result in a quicker timeframe.

No matter what your dental needs, it is essential to learn what is right for your specific care. Ask questions, search the Internet and talk to friends that have had dental treatment. Above all ask your dental professional. They welcome your questions and want you to understand your options.

For more information or to schedule a consultation, please contact Dr. Spitz at 617-437-1060.

What type of dentist can place dental implants with the laser?

When looking for a dentist to place your implants with the laser, seek out a dentist that has training and experience surgically placing implants, usually being periodontists and oral surgeons. However, do keep in mind that they do not typically continue through with the restoration phase. Seeking out prosthodontists or general dentists who are surgically trained in placing implants is an option where they have the ability to take you completely from the surgical to the restoration phase, start to finish. When you find a surgical dentist that fits your surgical criteria, ask them if they use the Waterlase laser for implant placement. Once you find a dentist that has the implant and laser training you are comfortable with, schedule a consultation to meet the doctor personally to answer your questions.



Confidence begins with a great smile.

Steven D. Spitz, DMD is founder and principal of Smileboston™ Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry; a Boston-based dental office specializing in full-mouth dental care. Dr. Spitz is the only prosthodontist in New England treating patients with the Waterlase® MD, utilizing dental lasers for treatment, dental implant placement, tooth restoration and full mouth rehabilitation. He lectures nationally and internationally on the advanced applications of lasers and implant dentistry, and has been honored as Best Cosmetic Dentist by the Improper Bostonian and mentioned as, "One of the most reputable places in Boston for cosmetic procedures" by Boston Magazine. Dr. Spitz, who treats all facets of dentistry, welcomes your questions.

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