

# ifoundMYdoctor.com

**Published:** February 13, 2017

## Dental Implants Restore Quality of Life

When Robert Barnes, 75, grew bored with retirement, he helped found The Children's Hunger Project. The project became a labor of love for the retired broadcaster and marketing specialist. It provides food packages for Brevard County school children who otherwise would go hungry.



Robert is no longer limited in what he can eat.

"We provide packages of food for over sixteen hundred kids every weekend at over three dozen elementary schools," notes Robert. "It's for children teachers know would be coming to school hungry on Monday morning."

In between working many hours at the charity, Robert had to take care of another issue. His teeth had given him trouble since his youth, and some were missing or loose.

"I've had gum problems since I was very young and lost a good number of my teeth. It was time to do some fix-up, so to speak," he explains. "I wanted to make sure that I had a decent look and the ability to chew properly."

His immediate concerns were two damaged molars on the left side of his mouth.

"They didn't necessarily limit me from eating certain foods, but if I was chewing something that was difficult, like a steak, I would make sure I was chewing on the right side," explains Robert. "The right side was more stable, and that was just something that I had to be conscious about when eating."

In characteristic fashion, Robert delved into finding the best dentist who could help. He asked for recommendations from friends and acquaintances, and their feedback led him to Clark F. Brown, Jr., DDS, at Implant Dentistry of Florida in Melbourne.

"I started asking around, talking to different people in the community, and Dr. Brown's name popped up," recalls Robert. "I went and interviewed him and was very comfortable speaking with Dr. Brown

and his staff. I said to myself, *Boy, this is good!*

Dr. Brown is a comprehensively trained and experienced dentist who has practiced cosmetic, general and implant dentistry for more than 30 years. His credentials and the personal warmth of his office convinced Robert that Dr. Brown was the dentist he was seeking.

## Protecting Front Teeth

“When Robert first came to my office, he had just lost the molar on his left side about five months earlier,” notes Dr. Brown. “He found that it was more difficult to chew, and he knew he was just chewing more with his front teeth, and that wasn’t efficient.



### Subperiosteal implant

“Robert didn’t have a partial denture, and he didn’t want one. He was looking to replace his missing teeth with implants.”

Many people don’t realize that replacing missing back teeth is important for good oral health, explains Dr. Brown. An adverse effect is how missing back teeth can affect the front teeth.

“Often, patients are just interested in replacing missing front teeth because they want to be able to smile,” comments Dr. Brown. “Of course, smiling is important, but the back teeth should not be ignored. The teeth in the front weren’t meant to chew. They’re meant to bite into food and move it to the back, where there are larger teeth designed to chew food.

“When patients are missing teeth in the back, not only are they not chewing properly, they’re also putting more force on the teeth in the front, which can accelerate tooth loss in the front. So, having teeth in the back is important, and implants are the best way to get those teeth back.”

People who have a partial denture for missing molars also may believe they can chew without inserting their denture.

“A partial is something that comes in and out and is clustered around remaining, natural teeth. It can feel foreign in your mouth and if you’re not used to it, a lot of times, you’re not going to want to wear it,” explains Dr. Brown.

“Sometimes when people have enough back teeth that they can still chew, they don’t wear their partial,” he continues. “But it becomes just a matter of time before they don’t have their front teeth because of the additional stress placed on them, and now they’re in dentures.”

Implants are recognized as the gold standard for replacing missing teeth. They are surgically placed in the jawbone, where their function becomes similar to the roots of natural teeth. The implants fuse to the bone. They are then able to firmly support an attached crown for a single tooth or a denture that replaces multiple teeth. The restorations remain permanently in place and are cared for by brushing, flossing and routine professional cleaning, just like natural teeth.

Dr. Brown has been placing and restoring dental implants since 1982. He is board certified by the American Board of Oral Implantology, is a Diplomate of the International Congress of Oral Implantologists and a Fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry.

Through advanced technology at Implant Dentistry of Florida, Dr. Brown is able to complete all aspects of the implant procedure under one roof. It includes 3-D imaging that guides exact placement of the implant, as well as making the attached crowns.

He knows the importance of creating a detailed plan to guide him in the process of restoring an individual’s lost teeth.

“I begin by asking what the patient wants as an end result and what are their goals and desires,” explains Dr. Brown. “Then, it is a matter of planning how we can accomplish those goals and give them what they would really like. And with the technology we have and the experience I have, it enables me to do that.”

“Dr. Brown is very meticulous and very knowledgeable,” emphasizes Robert, who also appreciated the skilled dentist’s ability to help him feel calm.

“You have to understand, and I can’t emphasize this enough – I’m a very fearful patient. I’m a nervous wreck when I go in to get my teeth cleaned,” Robert admits.

Dr. Brown’s gentle and reassuring manner helped allay Robert’s anxiety. He made sure Robert was always comfortable and that he didn’t experience any pain.



Dr. Brown explains to Robert how replacing missing molars with implants protects overall oral health.

“There were no problems at all,” reports Robert. “As a matter of fact, the experience of having this done, quite frankly, was easier than getting a tooth filled. It was the best dental experience I’ve had in my life.”

Recently, Robert needed implants to replace loose molars on the other side of his mouth. He didn’t hesitate to return to Dr. Brown for the procedure nor did he feel the anxiety he once did about seeing a dentist.

“I had very little fear when I came back to have the right side done,” he says.

He faced an additional hurdle, however, for his second procedure. The bone mass in his upper jaw wasn’t thick enough to hold the implants in place. He needed a *sinus graft* to augment bone density.

“For Robert, it all went pretty easily,” assures Dr. Brown. “We placed the implant and at the same time did what is called a *sinus augmentation* to add grafting material in the sinus that helps support the implant. It worked out well for him.

“Now, he can use those back teeth to chew again. He will also be preserving his front teeth from the accelerated wear they would have otherwise had.”

## New, Secure Smile

Like Robert, William Reichley struggled with dental challenges since early adulthood.

As a young man, William lost all of his teeth and needed dentures ever since. At 72, the retired orchid nursery owner was enjoying retirement. What he wasn’t enjoying was how his lower denture was affecting his quality of life.

The denture frequently slipped out of place, which was a problem at restaurants. William enjoys dining out with friends, but in the middle of meals, he often had to excuse himself from the table to reapply denture adhesive.

“As I was eating, the adhesive would disappear. My denture would actually come up off my jawbone and float,” he shares.

The ill-fitting denture affected his ability to chew. “One of my favorite foods is steak. To eat it, I had to cut the meat into very small pieces. I just had no chewing power left in my bottom jaw,” he continues.

“There were times when I wanted a salad but wouldn’t order one because I knew I wouldn’t be able to eat it. I would order the soup instead. I steered away from anything that required a lot of chewing.”

Reapplying denture adhesive was part of William’s routine outside of restaurants, too. Not only was the process inconvenient and messy, but it also worried him.

“I had to apply adhesive to my lower plate several times a day, and I knew that this couldn’t go on. I was concerned about what all that adhesive might be doing to my body,” relates William. “I was miserable because I couldn’t keep my dentures where they belonged.”

William began to consider traditional dental implants. His search for a dentist he could trust led him to Dr. Brown.



Progressive bone loss caused by tooth loss still allows placement of the subperiosteal implant.

“I was quite impressed by Dr. Brown’s many successes,” notes William. “And I liked that not only does he perform dental implant procedures, he also teaches the procedures. I figured anyone who teaches other dentists must be really good.”

## Overcoming Bone Loss

During William’s initial visit, a complete evaluation by Dr. Brown revealed why William’s denture frequently slipped out of place. The bone structure of his jaw had atrophied from his long use of dentures, which isn’t unusual. The body naturally reabsorbs bone that surrounds teeth roots when teeth are missing, and over time, this will affect how dentures fit.

“Very often, people who have worn dentures for a long time don’t have enough bone to hold a denture in place,” notes Dr. Brown.

Lack of bone density presented another challenge. William didn’t have enough bone for placement of traditional dental implants. In fact, the bone loss was so extensive that bone grafts weren’t going to be a practical solution.

“William would have needed an extensive amount of grafting for traditional implants. During the process, he would also have had to go on using his loose, uncomfortable denture for another six to seven months,” notes Dr. Brown.

However, William wasn't out of luck, or doomed to an ill-fitting denture.

Dr. Brown recommended an alternative: a type of implant that doesn't require bone grafts, called a *subperiosteal implant*. A subperiosteal implant differs from traditional implants in shape and placement, and bypasses the challenge of a thinned jawbone.

A subperiosteal implant is a custom-made metal framework placed *on top* of the jawbone, underneath the gum.

"During the healing process, a fibrous membrane on the jawbone's outer surface, the *periosteum*, firmly attaches to the implant's framework," educates Dr. Brown.

"That is what keeps the implant solidly in place and prevents it from moving," he continues. "All that is seen are metal posts that protrude from the gum tissue. The denture just snaps into place."

Subperiosteal implants are a time-tested technology. They first started being used as a solution for securing loose dentures in 1948.

"I've been placing implants for nearly thirty-five years, and the first two I did were subperiosteal implants," notes Dr. Brown. "More than three decades later, those two patients are still doing well with them."

Advancements in technology have made the procedure for subperiosteal implants less invasive.

Previously, the gum had to be surgically opened twice for a subperiosteal implant. The gum was first opened to make an impression of the jawbone that was used to manufacture the implant. After the implant was finished and ready for insertion, the gum was opened a second time to place the device.

"We have a cone beam CT scanner that creates a high-definition, three-dimensional image of the jawbone. This digital image eliminates the need to open the gum to take an impression," explains Dr. Brown.

"The CT scan is sent to a company that then makes an exact replica of the patient's jaw," he says. "From there, the replica is sent to a lab to create the implant that will precisely match the individual's jaw. The only surgery needed is to place the implant."

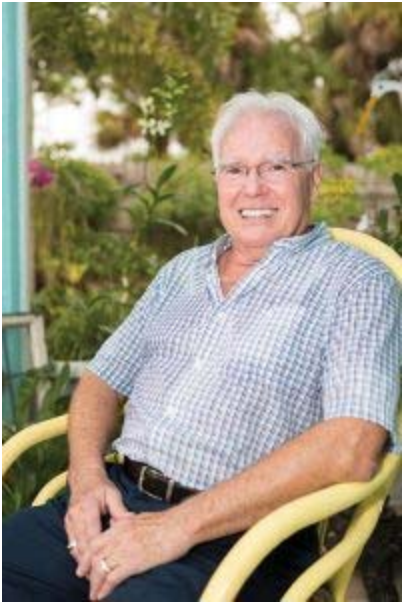
William had the in-office procedure with moderate IV conscious sedation. He only needed an over-the-counter pain reliever the next day.

Dr. Brown's expertise, along with the warm and friendly atmosphere of his office, gave William confidence about having the procedure. He knew that he was in good hands.

"I never had a moment of anxiety about what was going to happen," he notes. "Everything was explained to me so well that I went in with no fears, no doubts and no questions whatsoever."

## Phenomenal Results

Both Robert and William are pleased with the results of their dental implants. Having implants allows them to chew normally and adds to their quality of life, they report.



William is thrilled with how a new dental implant has improved his quality of life.

“I don’t have to think about how I’m chewing when I’m eating,” notes Robert about how he no longer has to favor one side of his mouth. “I can just chew normally, like most people are able to do.”

William describes his new implant as “absolutely wonderful.” For the first time in decades, William can get through his day without worrying about being embarrassed by a dislodged denture.

The implant doesn’t move at all, even when he’s eating. Plus, not a single drop of dental adhesive is required.

“Having a dental implant has been phenomenal. It’s a great, great result and I’m very happy,” enthuses William. “I eat anything I want. In fact, I recently went out and had a steak dinner – with a salad. I am still enjoying going out with friends and being able to say, *Guess what. I’m chewing and I don’t have to leave and put denture adhesive in my mouth.*

“I recommend Dr. Brown to people all the time. His clinic is wonderful and so is his staff,” he continues. “I can only say good things about Dr. Brown and what he has done for my life.”

**FHCN article by Susan Hemmingway. Photos by Nerissa Johnson & Jordan Pysz. Graphics courtesy of Implant Dentistry of Florida.**

---

Share this:





215 Bullard Parkway, Temple Terrace, FL 33617  
[813.989.1330](tel:813.989.1330) | [888.714.6728](tel:888.714.6728) | [info@ifoundmydoctor.com](mailto:info@ifoundmydoctor.com)

© 2017 Florida Health Care News, Inc.

