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## New, Secure Smile

### A solution for loose denture, despite bone loss.

At 72, William Reichley is enjoying retirement. In his working life, he operated an orchid nursery in Key West for 30 years and later was employed as a pharmacy technician.



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

He has worn dentures for decades because of tooth loss that began during his early adulthood. Lately, his lower denture was interfering with his quality of life. It frequently slipped out of place.

This was a problem at restaurants, where he enjoys dining with friends. In the middle of a meal, 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. “And I was miserable because I couldn’t keep my dentures where they belonged.”

William began to consider traditional dental implants, which can be surgically placed in the jaw to hold a denture firmly in place or replace missing teeth. Dental implants are considered the gold standard for tooth replacement and denture enhancement, and can last a lifetime.

First, William wanted to find a dentist he could trust, one with advanced knowledge of dental implants and years of experience. His search led him to Clark F. Brown, Jr., DDS, of Implant Dentistry of Florida.

Dr. Brown is a comprehensively trained and experienced dentist who has practiced cosmetic, general and implant dentistry in Melbourne for more than 30 years.



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.”

Another type of implant

During William's initial visit, Dr. Brown performed a complete evaluation of his mouth and dental situation. He noted that William's jawbone had atrophied from long-term use of dentures, which isn't unusual. The body naturally reabsorbs bone that surrounds teeth roots when teeth are missing.

The decreased bone structure was the reason William's denture frequently slipped out of place. There simply wasn't enough bone for it to hold on to.

"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. "There also isn't usually enough bone left for placing traditional implants."

Traditional implants are shaped like screws and inserted into the jaw. The bone then grows and fuses to the implant, making it stable enough to support a crown or bridge, or snap a denture on and off. If there is not enough natural bone present, donor bone can often be grafted into the areas where implants are needed. This creates a place where the implants can be inserted.

However, William's bone loss was extensive. "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.

The skilled dentist recommended a better alternative for William: a type of implant that doesn't require any 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.

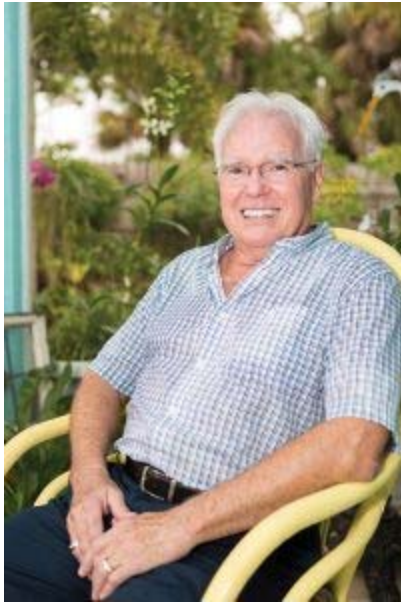
"During the healing process, a fibrous membrane on the jawbone's outer surface, the *periosteum*, firmly attaches to the implant's framework," educates Dr. Brown.

"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 has to be snapped 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 that 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.



William can rely on his bright smile, thanks to a new dental implant that keeps his denture firmly in place.

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.

“Now, 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.

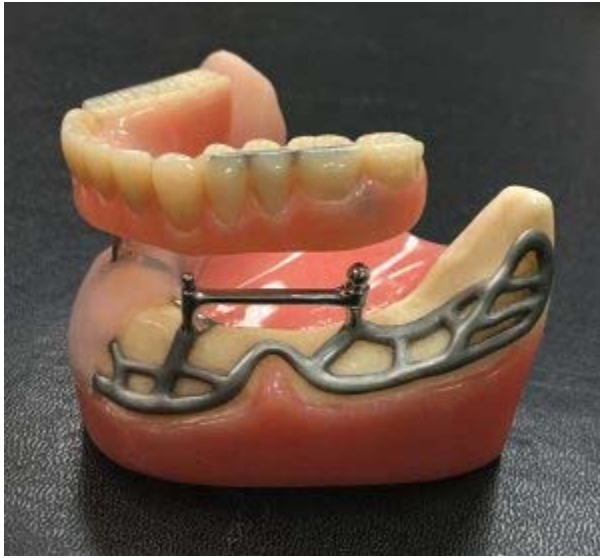
“The CT scan is sent to a company which then makes an exact replica of the patient’s jaw,” he says. “From there, the replica is sent to a laboratory to create the implant that will precisely match the individual. The only surgery needed is to place the implant.”

### Goodbye adhesive!

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 being anxious 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.”



### Subperiosteal implant

He describes his new dental 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.

Attached to the new implant, his denture doesn’t move at all, even when he is eating. And he loves that not a drop of denture adhesive is required. “I used to have to buy a lot of denture adhesive, but not now. I’ve probably put some adhesive companies out of business since the placement of my implant by Dr. Brown,” jokes William.

“Having a dental implant has been phenomenal. It’s a great, great result and I’m very happy,” he enthuses. “I eat anything I want now. 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.*”

William says he is grateful for Dr. Brown’s knowledge and skill. Although William wasn’t a candidate for traditional implants, Dr. Brown provided another type of implant that greatly improved his quality of life.

“I recommend Dr. Brown to people all the time. His clinic is wonderful and so is his staff,” comments William. “I really can’t say enough good things about Dr. Brown and what he has done for my life.”

*FHCN article by Susan Hemmingway. Patient photos by Jordan Pysz. Additional graphics courtesy of Implant Dentistry of Florida.*

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