

Focus on: locator bar overdenture

Patients who have worn upper dentures for several years have usually lost maxillary bone and need an overdenture to provide good lip support and aesthetics.



Milled titanium bar attached to five implants



Chrome-cobalt denture



Definitive denture fitted; the patient is delighted

Patients who have worn upper dentures for several years have usually lost maxillary bone, and therefore a labial flange on their upper denture is needed to provide good lip support. This situation often makes the use of a fixed implant bridge difficult, as you cannot make a bridge that the patient can clean, which also provides good lip support.

An alternative is to carry out extensive bone and gum grafting, which involves multiple surgeries and extensive costs. This situation is more difficult in patients presenting with high lip lines. Many of the patients we see also want to improve the taste and sensation of food by opting for an alternative that does not cover their palate.

In these situations a good solution is to provide support for an implant overdenture by placing a minimum of four implants at least 10mm in length. After a suitable healing time the implants can be linked with a screw-retained CAD CAM titanium bar with locator attachments.

This means an overdenture with an open palate can be made, providing excellent lip support and aesthetics with a stable removable device, which patients can easily clean. The overdenture requires a chrome cobalt subframework for strength. Unlike conventional bars and clips or precision attachments, locator attachments are easy to replace and service if they wear. Different strength nylon inserts can be used to give varying

retention forces. These nylon inserts can easily be changed at the patient's annual maintenance examinations at a low cost.

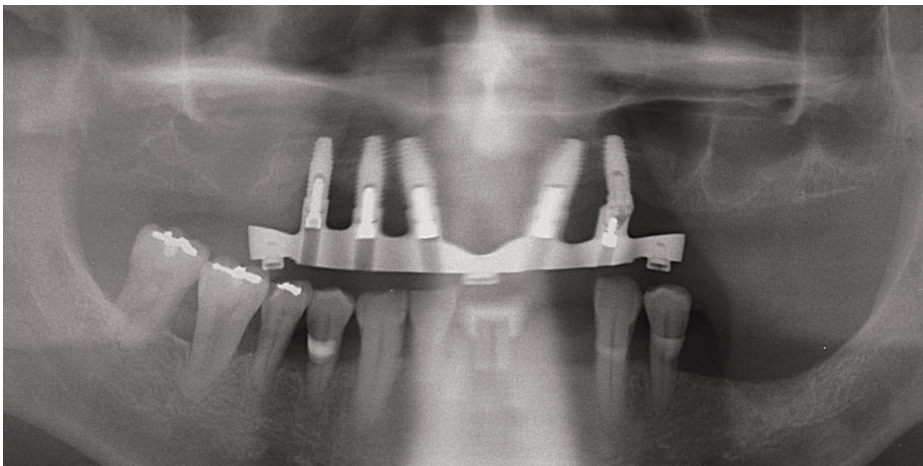
The patient shown had a problem with an unstable upper denture, that caused problems when eating and talking. He also has a high lip line, and the need for lip support made it impossible to achieve a good result with fixed implant bridgework.

We placed five Biomet Osseotite implants, which were attached to a screw-retained milled titanium bar with three locator attachments. An upper chrome cobalt denture with locator attachments and an open palate was constructed.

At the outset of treatment the patient's main desire was to bite into an apple; the resulting very stable overdenture meant that he could. He also reported an improved sense of taste as the denture no longer covered his palate.

Patients are typically investing in the region of £13,000 to £15,000 for this type of treatment.

If you would like support to offer this treatment in your practice, Module B of our Modular Prosthetics Course covers this topic. For more information on this course, please contact our Managing Director, Cat Collins, on 01252 715706 or email cat@elmsleighhouse.com



Tim Thackrah



Tim qualified with honours from the Royal Dental Hospital, London in 1982. His main interests are dental implants and cosmetic dentistry, which he has been offering as treatments for more than twenty-five years.

Tim has undertaken numerous courses in restorative dentistry, bone regeneration and implant dentistry in England, the USA and Sweden. He also lectures and run courses in dental implant and cosmetic dentistry.

If you would like to discuss a case with Tim before referring, he can be contacted on 01252 713797 or email tim@elmsleighhouse.com