

Focus on: immediate fixed teeth

We are receiving more enquiries about immediate fixed teeth from our referring dentists and their patients. These patients are keen to avoid the loss of dignity and embarrassment they associate with wearing a denture, while the dentists understand the role of dental implants in preserving their patients' remaining bone and gum.

For the past 15 years we have been offering a range of immediately-loaded implant systems including: Nobel Novum; All on Four; Biomet DIEM; and the new Biomet Columbus protocol. During this time we have found that each of these systems has advantages and disadvantages, and as with most dental procedures it is vital to select the best solution for each individual patient.

When we see patients for an initial implant consultation we always discuss immediate implant solutions when appropriate. If patients have enough bone we can offer predictable outcomes with immediate loading on four to six dental implants.

For immediate fixed teeth, the normal procedure involves removal of any failed dentition, placing immediate implants and attaching a temporary fixed bridge designed for immediate loading. The All on Four, DIEM and Columbus systems can all be used in both the mandible and maxilla, whereas Nobel Novum was only designed for the lower jaw, and for this reason we no longer offer it to patients.

The limitation of the All on Four and DIEM systems is their reliance on a plastic temporary restoration, made from an adapted denture or a new temporary denture. To increase strength this temporary restoration is generally quite bulky, but in our experience there is still a risk of micro movement and fracture, which can prevent the implants from integrating. To allow room for these bulkier restorations it is also common to sacrifice more bone during the implant surgery, which can cause problems for the patient with phonetics, function, cleaning and cosmetics.

In 2012 we began to trial the new Columbus system, which is designed around a metal reinforced temporary bridge (Figure 1). The original protocol was developed at Genoa University, Italy, specifying the fabrication of a splinted metal reinforced bridge, which was normally fitted 1-2 days after surgery. Working with our clinical dental technician, we have developed a process of constructing the reinforced bridge (Figure 2), which takes only six hours, allowing the patient to have the bridgework fitted on the day of surgery.

The advantage with this new Columbus system is that it allows us to be more conservative during the surgery, resulting in less bone loss. The design of the metal reinforced bridge means we can produce a stable, accurate, temporary bridge, which is less bulky for the patient and aesthetically pleasing. In clinical trials this system also prevented micro-movement, which will lead to higher integration rates for your patients.

The fees for the different types of immediate full arch work typically range from £12,500 to £24,000 per jaw.

If you would like to introduce the concept to your patients they should find our new website helpful: www.elmsleighhouse.co.uk

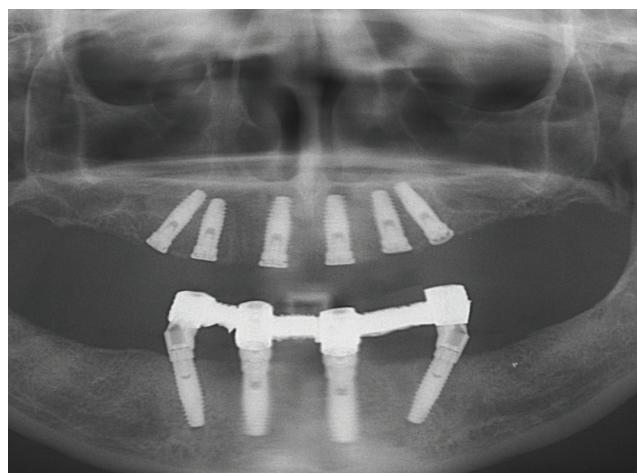


Figure 1. The temporary metal reinforced bridge in position



Figure 2. The temporary metal reinforced bridge

Tim Thackrah



I qualified with honours from the Royal Dental Hospital, London in 1982. My main interests are dental implants, which I have been placing for 23 years, and cosmetic dentistry.

I have undertaken numerous courses in restorative dentistry, bone regeneration and implant dentistry in England, the USA and Sweden. I also lecture and run courses in dental implant and cosmetic dentistry.

If you would like to discuss a case before referring I can be contacted on **01252 713797** or email tim@elmsleighhouse.com