



Half of General Dentists Placing Dental Implants: The Wealthy Dentist Survey Results

Half of general dentists offer their patients surgical dental implants, according to a survey conducted by The Wealthy Dentist. On the other hand, fully four out of five specialists place implants. Dental implants are an essential part of modern dental care. When it comes to implant dentistry and tooth implants, both passions and controversy run high.

Tiburon, CA, June 04, 2007 --(PR.com)-- Approximately half of general dentists are placing [dental implants](#). In a recent [dental consulting](#) survey conducted by TheWealthyDentist.com, each dentist was asked if they place implants themselves. Fifty-three percent of the general dentists in the poll indicated that they do dental implant placement themselves. The remaining 47% of general dentists refer patients to a specialist.

Not surprisingly, dental specialists had a very different profile than general dentists. Four out of five specialists responding to this poll place dental implants, as opposed to only one out of two general dentists. Those who do not place implants are endodontists, prosthodontists, and pediatric dentists.

Dental implants are a permanent solution to lost teeth. Rather than a removable denture, patients are given titanium implants. Because of its ability to bond with bone, titanium is an ideal material for surgical implants. An artificial tooth is then placed over the implant. In the past several decades, dental implants have exploded in popularity, offering a more natural tooth replacement than any other current dental technique.

Many general dentists are more than happy to accept straightforward implant patients, but refer out the more difficult cases. As a Florida general dentist said, "I place implants myself, but only in ideal situations." Another agreed, saying, "I offer implants. It depends on the complexity of the case; some are sent to a specialist."

Some questioned the ability of general dentists to properly place implants, A North Carolina general dentist explained his humility thusly: "I have neither the experience nor knowledge of anatomy that would allow me to feel comfortable placing implants." A Florida general dentist questioned the wisdom of a single practitioner offering too many services. "Like they say: if you try to be a jack of all trades, you will be a master of none. I am fortunate to have one of the best implant specialists in the entire country in my backyard. I never have to worry about improper or sloppy placement like I get from other 'professionals.'"

A number of dentists were left unimpressed by the performance of some specialists. "After referring to specialists for the last few years and getting back poor work (acentric, too facially inclined, off the center of the ridge, non-ossiointegrated), I thought: How much worse can I do?" commented a Georgia general dentist. "Now I offer implants. For practice doing sinus lifts I'll get a couple of sheep or pig heads."

From a patient's perspective, generalists who offer dental implants can be convenient. A general dental



practice in Minnesota has been pleased with the results. "After going to training in January and February, we started placing implants right away. Patients love that we can do the whole process from beginning to end."

More and more general dentists are interested in getting into the business of offering implants. "I refer implant patients to a specialist, but I am seriously considering placing them in some of the more straightforward cases," commented a California general dentist. A dentist from Greece agreed: "I'm taking a course in implantology, so soon I will offer them myself."

Restorations are quite another matter. "I restore implants and I refer placements out," said a Massachusetts general dentist. A Tennessee prosthodontist agreed, saying, "I restore but do not place implants."

A few dentists criticized specialists and the perception of them as more qualified to place dental implants than general dentists. "Every general dentist who can extract a tooth can do most implant surgeries," opined an Oregon dentist. "I feel that oral surgeons really do not want you to know how easy it is to do. All dentists owe it to themselves and to their patients. I restore 75% more implants now because I am placing my own. The acceptance was astonishing."

Many general dentists are proud of the success they have had with dental implants. "I've been placing implants since 1984. I did an internship in implants at Midwest Implant Institute. In twenty years, I have only ever lost one dental implant due to implant non-integration," proclaimed a Michigan general dentist. A Virginia dentist agreed, saying, "Most implants are well within the abilities of GPs. The expertise comes in knowing which ones to refer out."

The need for referrals helps to foster a healthy relationship between general dentists and specialists (at least in some cases). "We do the prosthetic portion of the process; we do not do the surgical placement of the implant," explained a New Hampshire general dentist. A Pennsylvania doctor was in a similar situation: "I use mini-implants in office where and when I'm able. I refer out traditional implants." A New York dentist described his process: "I have a specialist come to my office. I do the restorative portion myself." One Virginia prosthodontist is lucky enough to have in-house assistance: "I pick and choose. Those patients who need a more complex treatment are referred to our in-house oral surgeon or periodontists."

"Those of you who aren't in the industry might not know how passionate dentists can be about dental implants," said The Wealthy Dentist founder and dental management consultant Jim Du Molin. "Implants have been one of the most significant developments in dental care over the last century. The only problem is, it's still not entirely clear who is (and who should be) placing them. This is so often the issue: improving access to health care without compromising the quality of care patients receive."

For additional information on this and other Wealthy Dentist surveys, as well as more dentist comments, visit www.thewealthydentist.com/survey.

The Wealthy Dentist is a dental marketing and dental practice management resource featuring dental



consultant Jim Du Molin. The site's weekly surveys and dental newsletters are viewed by thousands of dentists across the United States and Canada. The Wealthy Dentist is a sister company of the Internet Dental Alliance, Inc. (www.internetdentalalliance.com). IDA is the largest provider of websites for dentists, email patient newsletters and dental directories in North America.

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