

**H**aving dental implants in your mouth requires more care and attention than natural teeth, which is due to the fact that the seal between the gum tissue and the implant surface is much weaker than that of your natural teeth. Research has shown that gingivitis around implants can destroy 70% of this seal. When this occurs, bacteria and bacterial products have a free path of entry to the bone which will eventually result in implant failure. It is very important to follow the regime described below to keep your implants clean and healthy.

### ***Home Care Regime for Dental Implants***

- Clean the implant at least twice a day, especially after breakfast and the last meal of the day. These times are especially important as saliva flow decreases during sleep which allows bacterial accumulation.
- Tooth brushing options are:
  - a) Ultra-soft bristle toothbrush.
  - b) Motorized multitufted or unitufted tooth brush.

*Be thorough but gentle.*

*Clean the neck of the dental implant. Ask your hygienist to demonstrate the proper technique and angulation.*

Use proper oral hygiene aids. The following can provide effective yet gentle cleaning:

- a) Low abrasive commercial toothpaste.
- b) Floss, Superfloss, Floss threader, Pipe cleaners with synthetic bristles or Yam (dip in Peridex).
- c) Proxabrush with coated center wire and synthetic bristles.
- d) Disclosing tablets or solution to determine locations of plaque accumulation.
- e) Antimicrobial Mouth rinses: Use Peridex or Listerine. Apply to implant neck with hand, motorized toothbrush, or floss dipped in it at least once daily. If you have tooth colored fillings, avoid rinsing as it will discolor your fillings if used for a long time.
- f) Water Pic or other oral irrigation instrument: Because of its destructive potential, you should be carefully instructed in the use of oral irrigation. You should always select the lowest possible flow rate and never direct the stream at the gum of the implant junction.

This regime is specifically designed for implant patients. It is our belief that implant patients are the co-therapists in the implant procedure. The excellence required by the dentist demands that the patient be seen regularly to avoid potential problems that might lead to unexpected failure.