

Do I Really Need All My Teeth?

There are many among us who think it is no big deal to have a few missing teeth. In fact some of you reading this article would no doubt have lost one or more teeth and you most likely are not missing the tooth or teeth or at least you tell yourself that. However, it would be difficult to not notice a missing tooth when it is on display every time you open your mouth to speak, eat, laugh or even just smile like in the photo below.



This is certainly not a desperate situation and there are some of you thinking, it really is not that bad, forgetting that the word “bad” is being used. I do not think it is necessary to show how ugly a smile can become with a few front teeth missing but it would be close to accurate to conclude that if Amy Winehouse’s situation was like this photo below, she would not have been smiling so much, yet that is what some people are showing off on television.



The point being made is that missing teeth can be quite unsightly when it is on display and that may be the reason why some of you might have sought the help of a dentist when you really would have been happy to live your entire life without seeing a dentist.

Could there be another reason to replace missing teeth? Here’s another photo for you to consider.



The missing tooth in this scenario is not on display to the public. Notice that while you are moving around ignoring the gap, your teeth are moving in your mouth causing havoc in the process.

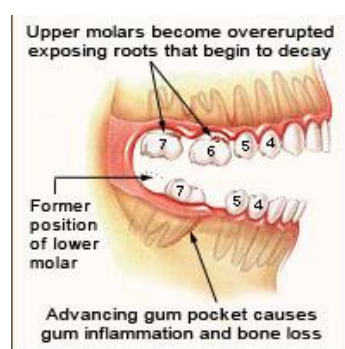
Problems that can result from one missing tooth include;

The tooth opposing the former missing tooth has nothing to bite on and starts to grow downwards (over-erupt) leading to exposure of the root surface, which can then lead to sensitivity and eventually decay.

Neighbouring teeth drift away and gaps are created leading to food traps which at first can be quite annoying in the least but then later lead to tooth decay.

The teeth around the gap start to tilt and make unfavourable contacts which can lead to jaw joint problems.

The tilted and drifted teeth develop deep gum pockets which can then later lead to bone loss and eventual tooth loss. This is like the “buy one get one free (BOGOF)” scenario, instead it is lose one, lose another free. But in this case, it will cost you in more ways than one.



This whole process can occur at different rates for different individuals. It is most likely that you are wondering what you can do to prevent all this from happening if you just recently lost a tooth or are about to lose a tooth. You may also be thinking twice about telling your dentist to extract that painful tooth of yours.

Possible Solutions

If you are experiencing pain and are thinking that removing the tooth is the only solution, it may not be. Ask your dentist if a root canal treatment is possible in your case, this procedure may be preserve your tooth for a considerable amount of time. Get a second opinion if you must. If your tooth cannot be saved, it is better to discuss replacement options with your dentist before you proceed with removing the tooth. These options include a denture, a bridge or an implant, the implant being the most ideal replacement option but also the most expensive. Do not feel pressurised by your dentist to choose an option; the underlying truth is that your dentist may persuade you to select the option that he has the skills to provide for you while down playing the one he is unable to provide. Each option has its advantages and disadvantages so be sure to do some research yourself. There are many dentists in various countries that would be glad to answer your questions for free. This is the era of Twitter, Facebook, Google plus etc.; use these tools to help yourself. Your smile is important and so is proper functioning of your teeth. I hope that you can keep your smile for as long as you can, we all deserve to.

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