

# TOOTHFULLY. *speaking*



## Getting “long in the tooth” is **NOT inevitable!**

Today adults are keeping their natural teeth more than ever before. Oral hygiene practices, public education along with heightened expectations are key to this fact. Researchers have repeatedly shown that oral health is important for basic comfort and appearance, but also for systemic health, nutrition, social and psychological well-being. Extraction of teeth is now the **EXCEPTION NOT THE RULE!**

Oral health is an essential element of healthy aging so much so that the Gerontological Society of America has released six specific recommendations aimed at raising people’s quality of life as they age for all medical health providers aimed at doctors, nurses, pharmacists, social workers etc. Nothing yet in Canada.

When I see patients about to face tooth loss, it is devastating. You are losing a body part! Yes, there are other teeth in the mouth that can take up the load .... but it truly is the beginning of the end. Scientists have show that once you lose one tooth you are 10X more likely to lose subsequent teeth. Nature created man as a herbivore.

Thus a full set of teeth is required to chew our salads, nuts, fruits and vegetables effectively and efficiently. If you cannot chew effectively then the digestion of these foods puts extra strain on the whole digestive tract leading to indigestion, poor and incomplete nutrient uptake and bowel issues. As an adult reaches retirement age, the plan is to enjoy the last third of one’s life with friends, family and FOOD. If you can’t do this, so many social occasions and interactions are compromised and restrictive. **NO FUN!**

Of course if teeth have to be lost, there are alternatives. Dentures are the **WORST** method of tooth replacement. Now with implants, replacing one or all the teeth is possible and there is a cost effective option for all budgets. Even though implants are the **BEST** way to replace missing teeth they are **NOT** your teeth: they are still more expensive than keeping your teeth, higher maintenance and very susceptible to the least bit of damage, food accumulation and infection vs your **NATURAL** teeth.

So be aware when weighing the alternatives of trying to keep your tooth vs calling it quits and going for the implant. Every day I see patients from all over dealing with implant problems. There is no magic bullet!



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