

# Replacing a Missing Tooth.



## Weighing the Options

	Partial Denture	Bridge	Implant
Cost (single tooth)	Approximately \$1000	Approximately \$2500-3500	Similar to bridge
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>q Lowest cost</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>q Solid</li> <li>q Not removable</li> <li>q Feels like real teeth</li> <li>q Good esthetics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>q Solid</li> <li>q Not removable</li> <li>q Feels like real teeth</li> <li>q Good esthetics</li> <li>q No involvement of other teeth</li> <li>q Preserves remaining bone</li> <li>q Easiest to clean</li> <li>q Cannot decay</li> <li>q Best expected lifetime</li> </ul>
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>q Bulky</li> <li>q Least comfortable</li> <li>q Wires and metal may show</li> <li>q Movement and looseness common</li> <li>q Can encourage decay or gum disease if not scrupulously cleaned</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>q Solid teeth required on either side of space</li> <li>q Adjacent teeth must be trimmed and connected.</li> <li>q Some challenge to keep clean</li> <li>q Decay of adjacent tooth can compromise bridge.</li> <li>q Does not preserve remaining bone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>q Adequate bone must be present</li> <li>q Slightly more costly than a bridge</li> <li>q Minor surgery to place implant in jaw</li> </ul>
Dental Plan Coverage	The most often paid. (they're the cheapest).	Varies widely	Usually not.

**It should not surprise anyone that insurance companies most often pay for the cheapest form of tooth replacement. More strangely, though, most who cover a bridge are reluctant to pay the same amount for an implant—even though implants are now known to have fewer complications and a better expected lifetime than bridges! This is changing gradually as consumers demand the best treatment for the money.**