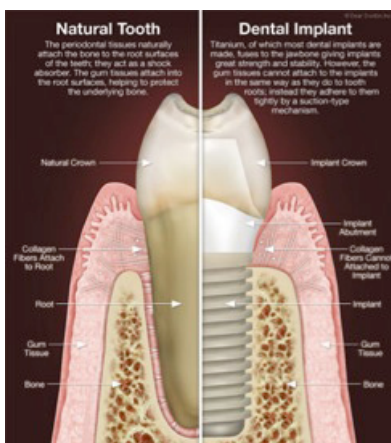


## Implant Hygiene



### Infection Is The Enemy

Cleaning implant-supported tooth replacements is just as important as cleaning natural teeth, as both depend on healthy surrounding tissues for support. Bacterial biofilm (plaque) collects on implant crowns just as it does on natural teeth, and must be removed on a daily basis at home. Without daily biofilm removal, infection can develop known as peri-implantitis ("peri" - around; implant "itis" - inflammation), which can result in loss of the attachment described above. Unlike inflammation around teeth, this reaction can be quite catastrophic both in rate and amount, quickly leading to a well- or dish-shaped loss of bone around an affected implant. Bone loss can rapidly progress to loss of the implant.

The dental hygienist has an important role to play in keeping dental implants infection-free, and there are many factors to be considered in selecting the right instruments for a professional cleaning. They include: the nature of the debris, meaning whether soft (biofilm, foods) or hard (calculus or tartar, calcified material); the location of the deposits; the type of surface on which they accumulate; and the stubbornness with which they adhere.