

Dental implant maintenance: Systematic after-care

Implants are exposed to many different influences within the oral cavity. The tissue surrounding implants is subjected to a significantly higher risk of inflammation through plaque than the gingiva. Bacteria and their metabolic products as well as antibodies of the immune system can cause inflammation of the oral tissue quite easily. Mucositis occurs, which could lead to periimplantitis. This serious condition can impair the outcome of the treatment.

Consequently, the superstructures as well as the residual dentition and any restorative work needs to be cared for continuously. In all cases, regular professional care must accompany the at-home measures. Implant restorations and the surrounding tissue are highly sensitive areas of the mouth and require special protection.

Professional tooth cleaning

Gentle, effective measures should be implemented, which do not traumatise the sensitive tissue. In all cases, professional tooth cleaning is requisite and a part of the standard treatment programme for patients with implants. Cleaning is particularly gentle, if it is carried out with the fine Proxyt prophylaxis paste and a soft cup, which adapts itself to the surface structure (Fig 1). The paste is characterised by a low RDA* value of 7. Unnecessary roughening is avoided and irritation of the gingival margin is prevented. The more abrasive Proxyt paste with an RDA value of 36 is available for removing tough films. The fine paste is used to give the surfaces a smooth polish, which prevents the bacterial biofilm from adhering to the tooth structure.

Protective varnish containing chlorhexidine

Following professional cleaning of the superstructures and teeth (Fig 2), it is advisable to apply a protective varnish like Cervitec Plus, which contains 1% chlorhexidine and 1% thymol (Fig 3). The varnish system effectively protects at-risk areas by sealing them. The time-tested ingredients reduce the number of harmful bacteria. Cervitec Plus is characterised by excellent flow properties and wetting behaviour. Therefore, even hard-to-reach areas, for example, retainer bars can be selectively treated. Cervitec Plus is relatively moisture tolerant. As a result, it is easy to apply. The clear varnish thinly coats surfaces and sets in seconds. To enhance the effectiveness of the treatment, the mouth should not be rinsed immediately after the application of the varnish. Because the varnish layer is so thin, it does not impair the fit of removable bar-retained dentures.



Fig 1: Professional cleaning of the bar retainer using the fine Proxyt paste



Fig 2: Rinsing and drying of the bar retainer from which plaque has been removed.