



## Why You Shouldn't Ignore Missing Teeth

Once you're past the age of believing in the tooth fairy, losing a tooth is no fun. However, if you're an adult who is missing teeth, the chances are good that you've had tooth problems for some time. With that in mind, it can be easy to just accept the tooth loss as an inevitability, rather than looking for tooth replacement options. If you're missing one or more teeth in the back of your mouth, you may even think that it's not a big deal since they aren't visible when you smile. But ignoring missing teeth can make your dental problems worse. Take a look at some important reasons you shouldn't ignore missing teeth.

### A Missing Tooth Can Lead to Gum Disease

When a tooth falls out, it leaves a wound in your gum tissue. And your mouth is a warm, wet spot that's a breeding ground for many different kinds of bacteria. This means that when you lose a tooth, you're at much higher risk of developing an infection than if that tooth remained intact. Not only can gum infections be painful and inconvenient, they can also lead to gum disease. When you develop gum disease, your gum tissue starts to recede, which can lead to even more tooth loss. What's more, gum disease is linked to a number of serious health conditions including heart disease and diabetes. That means that a missing tooth not only puts your gums at risk, but it also puts your overall health at risk as well.

### Your Teeth Can Shift Out of Alignment

Replacing a missing tooth can allow you to keep your perfectly aligned smile. Your teeth naturally sit very close together—that's why you have to use dental floss to clean in between them. When you lose a tooth, you're left with a large gap between the adjacent teeth. What you may not realize is that over time, these adjacent teeth will begin to lean or shift into that gap. This shifting can cause something of a domino effect. The teeth closest to the gap begin to lean, creating more space between them and their neighboring teeth. Eventually, the neighboring teeth begin to lean into that space, and so on. Before you know it, your straight teeth are crooked. Misaligned teeth are more than a cosmetic concern; they can also cause headaches and jaw pain. And on top of that, it's harder to clean your teeth when they're misaligned, which can lead to more decay and tooth loss.

### You'll Lose Bone Mass in Your Jaw

You may not realize it, but your jawbone needs stimulation to maintain its mass and shape. The bone gets this stimulation from the movement of your teeth as they click together. When you lose a tooth, the bone in that area no longer gets the stimulation it needs, and it will begin to lose mass. Over time, the loss of bone mass can cause your face to change shape. It can also create instability in your jaw, making it less able to support the remaining teeth. Dental implants are the best tooth replacement solution available. They can fill the gap, preventing infections and misalignment, and they also provide stimulation for your jaw bone. To find out more about whether dental implants are right for you, [schedule a consultation by calling 617-969-8558](tel:617-969-8558).

**Our dental office has the solution that is right for you**