

# Mississauga Dental Specialists

*Braces Invisalign Teeth Gums & Implants*

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## Introduction to Prosthodontics

Prosthodontics is the dental specialty pertaining to the diagnosis, treatment planning, and rehabilitation of patients whose dental conditions are associated with missing or deficient teeth.

Missing or defective teeth can be extremely detrimental to self-esteem and self-confidence. Teeth that were lost previously can cause changes such as increased spacing between the remaining teeth, a change in angulation of the adjacent teeth and the reduction of space available for the replacement of future missing teeth. Natural teeth can be worn down due to tooth grinding, clenching or abrasive wear. Often issues like gum disease and decay or the poor alignment of the teeth need to be controlled before prosthodontic treatments can commence.

A prosthodontist formulates a comprehensive treatment plan based on several diagnostic tests and informs the patient as to what options are available to them for the restoration of their teeth.

### **There are many reasons why a patient might seek a consultation from a prosthodontist:**

- Replacement of missing teeth with partial or full sets of dentures
- Replacement of missing teeth with dental implants
- Desire to improve the aesthetics of the smile with crowns or veneers
- Treatment of worn teeth
- Temporomandibular joint problems
- Alleviating severe snoring and managing sleep apnoea
- Reconstruction of the mouth following oral cancer treatments

### **Common Prosthodontic Procedures**

- **Dental Implants** – Dental implants are designed to hold artificial teeth and are comprised of titanium screws that are implanted in the jawbone in much the same position as a tooth root. Dental implants can replace single missing teeth or multiple missing teeth and even hold bridges and dentures in the mouth.
- **Dental Veneers** – Veneers are porcelain or ceramic shells that are bonded to the natural teeth. Veneers help to improve esthetic problems like uneven teeth, stained teeth, and chips and damage caused by wear and tear.
- **Dental Crowns** – Prosthetic crowns are generally made from porcelain, metal or a combination of the two. They are designed to replace larger surfaces of defective teeth, teeth with large fillings or root canal treated teeth.

- **Fixed Partial Dentures or Dental Bridges** – Bridges are prosthetic replacements for natural teeth. In a bridge, the missing tooth is replaced by taking support from the teeth on the adjacent side of the empty space. Natural teeth can support the bridge if they are in a good condition and have adequate bony support. If there are inadequate number of natural teeth to support a bridge, dental implants may be used as alternative anchors.
- **Complete Dentures** – A complete set of dentures can be fabricated for people who have no teeth. Teeth may have been originally lost due to gum disease or trauma. Complete dentures can also be fabricated and inserted the day of extraction of the teeth. Complete dentures restore esthetics and functionality to the mouth and make chewing and speaking easier.
- **Removable Partial Dentures** – A removable denture is a prosthesis that can be removed at will. Where many teeth have been lost, removable dentures can prove to be an excellent option. They enhance the aesthetics of the smile in addition to improving chewing ability.

### **What other problems can a prosthodontist treat?**

In addition to performing the treatments described above, the prosthodontist is also adept at diagnosis and treatment of problems with the jaw (Temporomandibular joint or TMJ).

Generally, the prosthodontist works in combination with other dental professionals to ensure the best possible restorative results are achieved. If you have questions or concerns about prosthodontics, please contact your prosthodontist.