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## Start-to-Finish Support: Placing Mini Dental Implants With Shatkin F.I.R.S.T.®

Shatkin mini dental implants, which range in diameters from 2 mm to 4.75 mm and are typically 10 mm to 18 mm in length, provide an alternative solution for patients who suffer with loose dentures or are missing teeth.

Over the past 18 years, Todd E. Shatkin, DDS, owner of Shatkin F.I.R.S.T.® and President Emeritus, International Academy of Mini Dental Implants, has placed more than 20,000 mini dental implants for denture stabilization, single and multiple tooth replacements, and full-arch reconstructions. He developed the F.I.R.S.T. (Fabricated Implant Restorations and Surgical Technique) procedure and secured a patent for it in 2006. Shatkin and his team lecture on and teach the procedure worldwide.

For certain patients, this technique enables the clinician to restore their teeth using mini implants in one appointment and in as little as an hour. "We see mini dental implants as an answer to almost all implant cases," Shatkin says. "In many instances a space is too small to place a conventional implant, and minis are the solution. This is why we have an increased number of specialists attending our courses."

Advantageous to the procedure is the patented Ossean™ surface of the Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. mini implants. This surface promotes osseointegration and enables even distribution of calcium phosphate, which is critical for controlling the physiology of osteoblasts and exhibiting bone adhesion. Additionally, the technique is performed without having to remove healthy tooth structure.

Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. provides customer service to practitioners throughout the entirety of their treatment process. Dentists can send in their polyvinyl impressions or CT scans, and Dr. Shatkin will assist in planning the case at no charge. His lab, which has executed more than 300,000 mini dental implant restorations, will provide a CT stent that will simplify the procedure. Instead of spending months waiting for healing of bone grafting, the practitioner can now drill with the provided CT stent and is able to place the mini implant within full or finer ridges.

"My team and I are always available to the dentist. Even if there's a problem while the patient is in the chair, I encourage the dentist to call me or a member of our staff immediately so we can assist throughout the process," Shatkin says.

The company has developed the patent-pending Fix On Six™ restoration, which Shatkin says is an economical alternative to an all-on-four technique. Six, 8, or 10 mini implants are placed, and the Fix On Six restorations are milled in the Shatkin F.I.R.S.T. lab from a zirconia puck. A practitioner would simply send the lab an impression, bite registration, and x-rays to receive a free case evaluation to get started with providing a patient this high-quality, fixed restoration, which is retrieved only by the dentist every 6 months.

According to Shatkin, the number of not only general dentists but also periodontists and endodontists attending his company's courses has grown, which he attributes to a high acceptance rate of mini implants through the F.I.R.S.T. procedure. Attendees also like the idea of a single-visit workflow with mini implants. "Practitioners employing the F.I.R.S.T. procedure can send the patient home with the ability to eat and resume normal daily activities immediately," he attests.

"We specifically focus on bringing more patients to the doctor," Shatkin says. "When doctors come to our course, they have the benefit of not only personal instruction but also of hands-on practice with the procedure." In addition, when a practitioner buys into the F.I.R.S.T. technique, Shatkin's team continues to provide support and education. As a result, he says, both practitioner and patient are provided with a level of comfortability prior to treatment.

The greatest joy in offering this treatment, Shatkin notes, is the life-changing effect it can have on his patients. "Most importantly, the use of mini implants allows patients to leave the office with useable teeth. They can start enjoying life right away," he raves.

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