

ACC Dental Implant Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines set out the criteria that must be met for ACC to consider contributing towards the cost of dental implants. The criteria were developed by ACC, in consultation with the New Zealand Dental Association.

Please note that:

- claims decisions will be based on the client's oral status at the time of injury (remediation of pre-existing, unmet treatment needs or other conditions that prevent the claimant from satisfying the eligibility criteria for dental implants will not improve or change their eligibility)
- if these criteria are met, there are other factors that we take into account before approving a claim, and clients should be told this (the other factors we must consider are summarised below under 'Summary of terms of ACC funding for dental implants').

Age and general health

- The client must be at least 21 years old.
- The client must be generally fit and healthy, and not be:
 - undergoing any of the following treatment: long-term steroid therapy; radiation therapy to a potential implant site; chemotherapy; haemodialysis; heart surgery (within the last six months)
 - taking anticoagulants or medication that contraindicates implant success, eg bisphosphonates
 - a smoker of more than 10 cigarettes per day.
- The client must not be suffering from metabolic disorders, chronic nephritis or a severe systemic disease (including leukaemia and collagen disorders such as systemic lupus erythematosus and scleroderma).
- The client must have no adverse psychological or behaviour patterns.
- The client must not be pregnant.
- If the client has insulin-dependent or non-insulin dependent diabetes, their HbA_{1c} must have been stable and in the 6-7% range or 42-53 mmol/mol over the last 12 months.

Dental health and history

- The client must have generally healthy, well maintained and stable dentition.
- The client must have healthy, well maintained supporting tissues.
- There should be no significant periodontal disease. If there is evidence of periodontal bone loss, you must supply a five-year history of periodontal maintenance demonstrating the stability of the periodontal condition.
- The client should have a five-year, auditable history of regular dental check-ups and preventative dental care, which is suggestive of their ability and commitment to manage their ongoing dental maintenance and oral health (ACC will consider applications without this five-year dental history, as long as all other criteria are met).

- The client must have a continuous maxillary and mandibular dentition, with no other un-filled edentulous spaces from first molar to first molar (an existing fixed bridge; missing 7's and 8's; teeth extracted as part of comprehensive orthodontic treatment; or congenitally missing teeth are acceptable). If the client does have a pre-existing edentulous space but the rest of their mouth meets this criterion, they can choose to have an implant before seeking an ACC-funded implant. Please note that ACC will only consider funding an implant for a 7s if all other second molars are present and in good condition.
- The client must have no dental habits or oral conditions that preclude the placement of implants, such as:
 - bruxism
 - poor oral hygiene habits
 - severe ulceration or erosive lesions
 - temporomandibular joint disorder
 - history of facial fractures (which may preclude the placement of implants, at least in the immediate future).

Positive indicators of successful, long-term treatment

- The client must be able to cope with the process of implant treatment, and must be capable of looking after their implant(s) and restoration(s) satisfactorily.
- The implant(s) and the existing dentition from first molar to first molar must be expected to survive for more than 15 years. The remaining teeth from first molar to first molar in both arches must be in such a condition that they will remain intact for a similar expected life of an implant.

Unrealistic expectations regarding treatment

- The client should not have extreme and unrealistic expectations of the aesthetic and/or functional result of treatment.

Summary of terms of ACC funding for dental implants

ACC is liable to contribute towards implant treatment if it's for the purpose of restoring the client's health to the maximum extent practicable, and the treatment:

- is necessary and appropriate
- has been or will be performed only on the number of occasions necessary
- has been or will be given at an appropriate time or place
- is of a type normally provided by the treatment provider
- is provided by a treatment provider of a type who's qualified to provide that treatment and who normally provides that treatment
- is provided after ACC agrees to the treatment.

When deciding if we can approve a client's treatment, ACC must take into account:

- the nature and severity of the injury
- the generally accepted means of treatment for such an injury in New Zealand
- the other options available in New Zealand for the treatment of such an injury
- the cost in New Zealand of the generally accepted means of treatment and the other options, compared with the benefit that the client is likely to receive from the treatment.