

Dept. of Dental Surgery

Editor's Pick

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I just had two dental implants placed a month ago after missing two teeth for several years. I noticed that the gum tissue, surrounding the two implants, has turned to a darker grey colour. Is that normal? Is it because a poor quality of metal was used?

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Dr Raymond Lim has been at the forefront of patient-centric dental care services and professional expertise since 2005. The National University of Singapore (NUS) alumnus who received a Bachelor of Dental Surgery (B.D.S) has advanced his professional career with three years at National Dental Centre treating trauma and emergency patients and a two-year post at polyclinics as the overall in charge. His subsequent years in private practice have further spurred his passion in implantology; he was awarded Aesthetic Implant Dentistry from the University of Uclan (UK) in 2011.



Founding B9 Dental Centre in 2013, Dr Raymond has seen early success with its current group of three dental centres within the first year. Lauded for their comprehensive expertise and trusted service, B9 Dental Centre was awarded with Top 10 Special Achievement in Dental Care Awards by Promising SME 500 2014.

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It is understandable that you are concerned. When implants are placed, some patients experience a darkened gum surrounding that area, but rest assured, this is not uncommon, and here might be the reasons why:

1. Your gum tissue is too thin

It very well could be that the darkened colour is due to a portion of the implant showing through the gums. Dental implants and abutments are made from titanium alloy, a dark grey coloured metal. Ceramic oxide seldom causes this problem, due to the natural colour of this material.

2. Implant design

there are bone level implant and gum level implant. Using gum level implant for a patient with thin gum will cause grey shadow to show. Generally, it is better to use bone level implant to minimise the unsightly grey shadow.

3. Depth of implant placement

placement of the bone level implant advisable at least at the bone level or

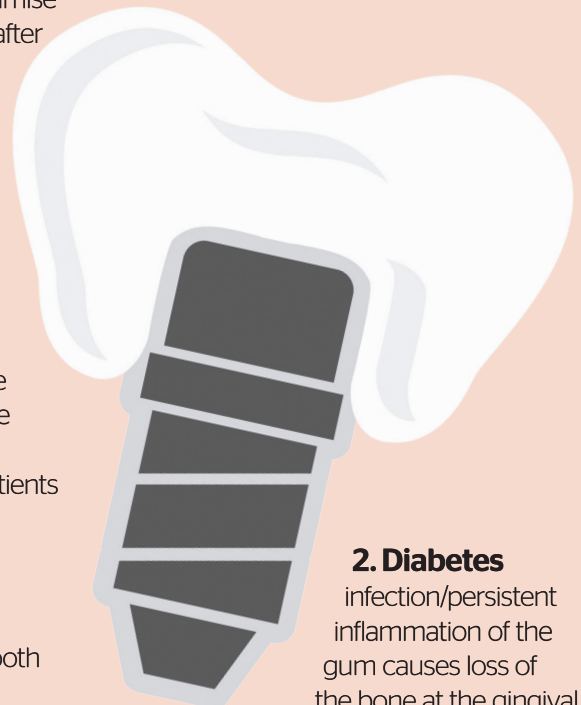
beneath the bone level to minimise the grey shadow. Sometimes after an implant has been placed, the gums and bone can recede causing the implant or abutment to become exposed. It is possible that the implant wasn't placed at the correct depth. The dark colour of your gums is usually just a cosmetic issue that will have no impact on the functionality or longevity of the implant.

To alleviate this problem, patients could do a soft tissue graft to thicken the surrounding gum tissue. Otherwise, you could replace the implant abutment (top portion) with Zirconia, a tooth coloured ceramic abutment.

The following problems might also be the reason why your gum is darkening:

1. Periodontal disease

bacteria from gum infection transmit to perimplant cause perioimplant.



2. Diabetes

infection/persistent inflammation of the gum causes loss of the bone at the gingival level/area.

See your dentist if you suspect you have gum disease, make sure there is no bone loss. Your doctor may have some recommendations to help with the cosmetic options. *PRIME*