

# Bridge Undergoes Repairs

Chronic problem reached a breaking point, but now her smile is sweet

There's a classic *I Love Lucy* episode in which characters Lucy and Ethel get jobs at a candy factory and hilariously find it impossible to keep up with an accelerating conveyor belt moving the sweets they've been tasked with wrapping.

JoAnne Pinheiro can relate.

One of her first jobs was at School House Candy, then located in Rhode Island, where she was tasked with wrapping a handful of jelly beans for an Easter basket full of goodies.

"It wasn't always easy keeping up," JoAnne admits. "I managed pretty well, though, and wound up working several assembly line jobs. One was with Hasbro Toys. One of the things I did there was put together the little motorcycle for GI Joe dolls."

JoAnne eventually got out of candies and toys and started a cleaning business. After retirement, she and her husband began spending winters in Florida, where a frustrating dental issue often disrupted their visits.

"The problem was with a five-tooth bridge I had on top," JoAnne details. "For some strange reason, whenever I came to Florida, it would break. I'd be eating something, I'd hear a click, and the next thing you know the bridge was broken in half."

"This went on for several years, and at first, no matter the dentist I went to down here, they didn't want to touch it. But it wasn't like I could just hop on a plane and go back to Rhode Island and get it fixed there either, so it became a real problem."

"Whenever that bridge would break, I had a hard time eating and chewing properly. And once it broke, I became very hesitant to smile because I didn't want people to see all those missing teeth. Like I said, it was a real problem."

## Breaking Under Pressure

JoAnne put up with that annoying problem for several years. Then, a couple of years ago, after the bridge broke yet again, a friend suggested she visit DeLand Implant Dentistry, the practice of Jayraj J. Patel, DMD.

Dr. Patel quickly discovered why JoAnne's bridge kept breaking. Put quite simply, the bridge was not built to handle the amount of stress it was being forced to absorb.

"The material the bridge was made of was part of the problem," Dr. Patel in-



JORDAN PYSZ/FLORIDA HEALTH CARE NEWS

For the first time in years, JoAnne is proud to show off her smile.

forms, "But the biggest problem was the amount of stress that was being placed on the bridge through JoAnne's bite."

"Everyone has a different bite force, or pattern. In JoAnne's case, she was biting down almost exclusively on her right side because she had no natural teeth on her lower left side and had stopped wearing a partial that no longer fit very well."

"So, too much of the bridge, which ran from the second molar all the way to the eye tooth on the right side, was not supported by natural teeth. As a result, every time she bit down, she overloaded the bridge material."

That stress didn't just cause JoAnne's bridge to break. It also caused other teeth to crack, so Dr. Patel began his treatment of JoAnne by placing crowns on the broken and cracked teeth. He then proceeded to replace the bridge with dental implants.

Dental implants are root-shaped, screw-like bodies that are surgically placed into the jawbone. Once the implant is in the jawbone, new bone naturally grows around it to form the foundation for an abutment and replacement teeth.

The replacement teeth can be a crown that is cemented or screwed onto the abutment, a partial bridge affixed to one or more implants, or a full denture fastened to a series of implants.

JoAnne was fit with two implants, each of which was capped with a tooth that adequately filled the open space and created proper function. Prior to placing the implants, however, Dr. Patel had to perform what is known

as a *sinus lift*.

"The roots of the upper teeth are right on the sinus floor, and when someone has been missing those teeth for a long period, that sinus floor starts to drop because there is nothing there to hold it up," Dr. Patel educates.

"The way to correct that is to perform a sinus lift, where we drill up to the sinus floor, gently crack the sinus floor and elevate the membrane. We then put grafting material between the membrane and implant to further secure the implant."

## "Love My Smile"

The grafting material needs three to six months to heal and form new bone around the implant. During that time, Dr. Patel replaced JoAnne's ill-fitting lower partial with dental implants.

"One of the teeth holding that partial had become loose because of the stress that was being placed on it, so replacing the partial with dental implants helped us save that tooth," Dr. Patel explains. "We also replaced the three previously missing teeth that were filled by the partial with implants on the lower left side. We also did a bone graft for two of those teeth."

## ADDITIONAL SERVICES

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- Oral surgery
- IV sedation



Bone grafts are not always necessary, but with patients who have been missing teeth for many years, a graft is sometimes required because bone mass deteriorates when there is no pressure from chewing to stimulate natural bone regeneration.

Dr. Patel completed the restoration project by placing a crown on the molar that was used to secure JoAnne's faulty bridge. That and the other changes gave JoAnne the proper function she'd long been missing and a smile she thought she'd never have.

"I love my smile now, and thanks to Dr. Patel, I'm no longer worried about people staring at my teeth whenever I talk to them," JoAnne enthuses. "That went on for such a long time, but everything is beautiful now. I'm actually very proud of my smile."

"That's why I highly recommend Dr. Patel. He's a great dentist and he made me feel very at ease. After all I'd been through with dentists, I was a little concerned at first, but he was very gentle and kind, and he did a great job." ■

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## MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT

DeLand Implant Dentistry offers a membership program for individuals and families. Member benefits include free cleanings, access to prime appointment times, same-day emergency care, reduced fees for any dental work and no limit on total treatment discounts.

For information, call  
**(386) 738-2006.**

## CALL TODAY!

Rajiv Patel, BDS, MDS, and Jayraj J. Patel, DMD, are known for their exceptional, caring attitude toward their patients and work. They are committed to delivering the most advanced, personalized dental care while offering patients a uniquely satisfying experience. Along with the staff of DeLand Implant Dentistry, they welcome new patients and any questions concerning their range of services, including cleanings and preventive care, sedation methods and cosmetic, restorative, prosthetic and implant dentistry.

For an appointment, call or visit the office:

**DeLand**

Spring Oaks Professional Center

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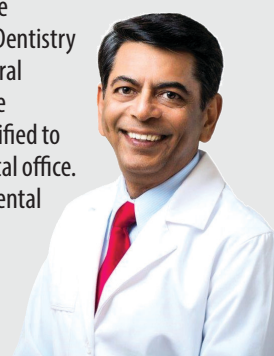
Jayraj Patel, DMD, FAGD, earned his dental degree from University of Florida College of Dentistry. His goal is to deliver comprehensive and compassionate care to patients in a caring, comfortable, and professional environment. He provides advance, personalized, and complete care using the latest technologies and treatment modalities with an aim to build a long-term relationship with patients based on trust, respect, and friendship. Driven by a deep passion to help patients, he is constantly pursuing advanced training through continuing education courses. He has extensive training in implant dentistry through the AAID MaxiCourse from Augusta University Dental College of Georgia and Comprehensive Implant Continuum from Implant Educators.

He is certified to perform IV sedation in the dental office. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Oral Implantology/Implant Dentistry, a fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry and International Congress of Oral Implantologists, and an associate fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry.



Rajiv Patel, BDS, MDS, practiced general dentistry in DeLand for more than 30 years before retiring. He is certified in implant dentistry through his designation as a diplomate of the American Board of Oral Implantology/Implant Dentistry.

Additionally, he is a fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry and International Congress of Oral Implantologists. He is one of the select few general dentists certified to administer IV sedation in a dental office. He is a member of the Florida Dental Association, American Dental Association and Florida Dental Society of Anesthesiology.



For detailed information about DeLand Implant Dentistry, visit [delandimplants.com](http://delandimplants.com)