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Trusted dentist's extensive restoration plan saves damaged teeth

The moment Darren* realized he was going to be affected directly by the 2018 eruption of Kilauea on the Big Island of Hawaii was when he saw a cloud of steam rising up from the road in front of the home he'd built there just two years earlier.

DELAND IMPLANT DENTISTRY
RAJIV PATEL, BDS, MDS
JAYRAJ J. PATEL, DMD

"I was out mowing the lawn at the time," Darren remembers. "We were a good 10 miles from the volcano, but the lava was flowing underground, and it eventually reached us and caused these big fissures in the ground around us."

Forced to evacuate, Darren and his wife spent a month in a hotel while waiting for the lava flow to cease. By the time it did, the lava had destroyed more than 700 homes, including the two-bedroom bungalow that was Darren's pride and joy.

"I designed and built that home, and it was fabulous," Darren relates. "It was about 1,900 square feet with beamed ceilings and two master suites. It had an open kitchen and everything. I even had a putting green outside."

"The lava was so hot that it burned everything. All we were able to save was a couple of suitcases of stuff. After that, we thought, *Well, what do we do now?* We eventually came to Florida and bought a house in Palm Coast."

Shortly after the move, a chipped tooth forced Darren, now 77, to go in search of a dentist. The closest one he could find was the Palm Coast practice of Jayraj J. Patel, DMD.

Top to Bottom

Dr. Patel soon learned that Darren had more to be concerned with than one chipped tooth. Years of inadequate dental care, he explains, had taken a toll on Darren's teeth.

"Darren's four upper front teeth in particular were in very bad shape," Dr. Patel reports. "He also had a failing long-span five-tooth bridge on the lower left that ran from his wisdom tooth all the way through his premolars."

"The first thing we did was educate him on the importance of proper maintenance. After that, he became a patient who was seeing us for regular cleanings."

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.

In 2020, Dr. Patel became a partner with DeLand Implant Dentistry, the longtime practice of his brother's father-in-law, Rajiv Patel, BDS, MDS.

"After I joined the new practice, Darren contacted me and asked if I would take care of the other problems," Dr. Patel recalls.

"That call was borne out of exasperation. Because he was also missing some upper molars opposite the lower failing bridge, Darren had been forced to chew almost exclusively with his front teeth. As a result, those front teeth were beginning to fail as well."

Dr. Patel proposed a complete smile makeover in which he would eventually restore all of Darren's failing and endangered teeth. That project started with the restoration of Darren's upper front teeth.

One of those four teeth, the right lateral incisor, had to be extracted, but Dr. Patel was able to salvage the other three and use them as the foundation for a four-tooth bridge made of three crowns and a pontic in place of the lost lateral incisor.

After fitting Darren with the bridge, Dr. Patel began his work on the lower left arch, where a decayed wisdom tooth had become problematic. In addition to causing Darren's old bridge to fail, an infection was causing some health issues.

"The infection didn't really cause Darren any pain; he just wasn't feeling well," Dr. Patel reports. "But once we removed the bridge and took the infected tooth out, he began to feel much better."

While removing the infected wisdom tooth, Dr. Patel carefully sectioned Darren's old bridge such that the crowns on the front anchor teeth had no damage and Darren didn't need to spend additional money to have new crowns there. He also replaced Darren's lower front six teeth with a six-unit bridge that required a bit of extra work prior to placement.

"On the lower front, Darren had received some veneers years ago while he was in Hawaii," Dr. Patel says. "Those teeth were failing due to *periodontal disease*, or gum disease, all across those teeth. We wound up removing those failing teeth and *grafting* that area. That allowed us to preserve whatever bone was left, and we replaced the teeth with a bridge that runs from eyetooth to eyetooth."

That bridge was the last phase of the restoration for Darren's lower arch.

One More Thing

Dr. Patel next turned his attention to Darren's upper left arch, which had been fit with two *dental implants* years earlier in Hawaii. Implants are screw-like bodies that are surgically placed into the jawbone to serve as the foundation for replacement teeth.

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

Darren was never fit with replacement teeth in Hawaii, but Dr. Patel, who extracted a failing upper left eyetooth and replaced it with yet another implant, used the new implant and one of the previously placed implants to support a new bridge with the teeth necessary to give Darren proper chewing function on the back left side of his mouth.

Darren's smile is now completely restored, aesthetically pleasing and functional.

"Yep, no more chewing with my front teeth," Darren exudes. "My teeth are good and strong and healthy. I can chew normally and eat anything I want. And I am thrilled with the outcome."

Darren drives more than 25 miles each way for his appointments in DeLand. Those journeys are a testament to his faith in Dr. Patel,

who educated him on oral care and gave him a smile he never thought he could have.

"I would never switch to another dentist; that's how much I believe in Dr. Patel," Darren concludes. "I won't even go anywhere else for cleanings because Dr. Patel knows what he's doing, and his staff is great. I'd recommend him to anyone. He's the best."

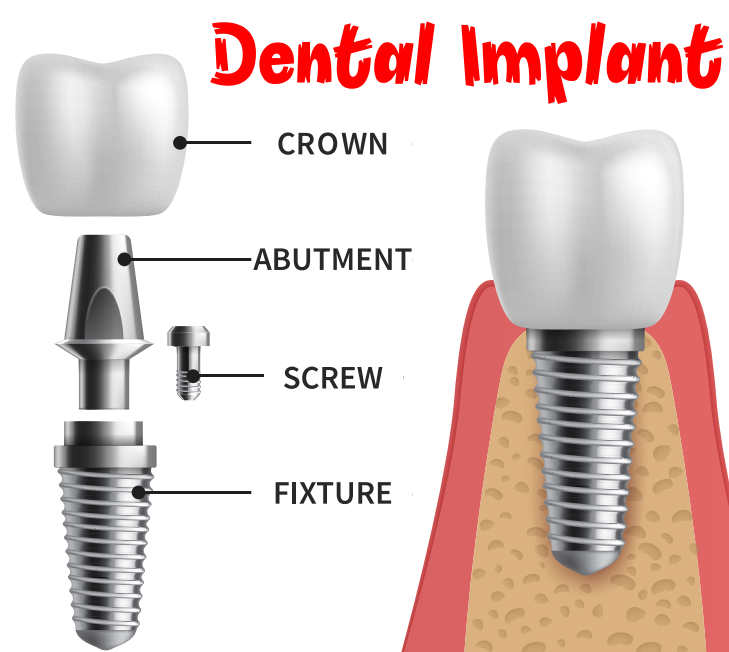
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*Patient's name changed at his request.

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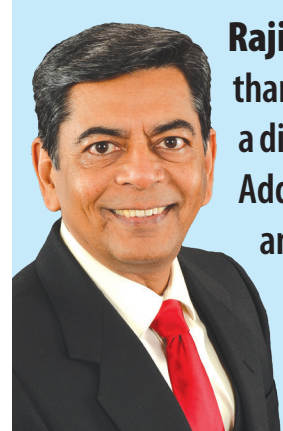
Rajiv Patel, BDS, MDS, and Jayraj J. Patel, DMD, are known for their exceptional, caring attitude toward their patients and work. They are committed to delivering the most advanced, personalized dental care while offering patients a uniquely satisfying experience. Along with the staff of DeLand Implant 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 in DeLand:

Spring Oaks Professional Center
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Rajiv Patel, BDS, MDS, has practiced general dentistry in DeLand for more than 30 years. 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.

Jayraj J. Patel, DMD, has been practicing general dentistry since graduating from the University of Florida College of Dentistry. His goal is to deliver comprehensive, compassionate care to patients in a caring, comfortable and professional environment. He strives to provide advanced, 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. Dr. Patel has extensive training in dental implant therapy through comprehensive courses such as the AAID MaxiCourse from Augusta University Dental College of Georgia and the Comprehensive Implant Continuum from Implant Educators. He is a fellow of the International Congress of Oral Implantologists, an associate fellow of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry and a fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry. He is pursuing certification from the American Board of Oral Implantology/Implant Dentistry.



For detailed information about DeLand Implant Dentistry, visit delandimplants.com