

# Like Rome, A Great New Smile Is Not Built In A Day

Patience is required when receiving a full mouth restoration, but the outcome is worth the wait

BY ROY CUMMINGS  
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It was nothing more than a stocking stuffer, a small bag of peanut brittle that her husband tossed into her Christmas stocking along with a new pair of wooly socks, a couple of refrigerator magnets and a few lottery tickets.

But boy, did that small bag of peanut brittle ever cause Alaina\* big problems.

"I love peanut brittle," Alaina says. "It's my favorite treat, and this bag that my husband got me for Christmas four years ago was from a new candy shop that had just opened up nearby. I was really excited to try it, but when I did, *Oh, boy.*"

Alaina's excitement over the peanut brittle immediately faded because her first bite left her with a broken left eye tooth. Thus began a dental saga that dragged on for more than three years, leaving Alaina with a ravaged, dysfunctional smile.

"I was lucky because the tooth that broke didn't hurt at all," Alaina says. "It looked horrible, though, so I hesitated to smile after that. And then my other teeth started breaking. Out of nowhere, teeth started breaking all over."

"We were in the process of moving from Indiana to Florida at the time, so by the time we got down here and I finally saw a dentist, pieces of about four teeth had broken off and fallen out, and a few others had cracked. It was awful."

"But that wasn't from eating peanut brittle. I had a tooth break once while I was just eating a sandwich. After that, I started eating only soft things like soups and yogurt. Finally, after we got settled, I went online and started looking for a dentist. That's how I found Dr. Patel."

## The Proper Protocol

Dr. Patel is Jayraj Patel, DMD, FAGD, FAAID, DABOI, of DeLand Implant Dentistry. He first met Alaina three years ago, and during his initial evaluation, he discovered that in addition to the broken and missing teeth, she was also suffering from *gum disease*.

To correct those problems, Dr. Patel presented Alaina with a full range of treatment options that ranged from "doing nothing" to performing a full-mouth restoration that included replacing the missing and broken teeth.

"She was interested in something permanent that she didn't have to take out of her mouth," Dr. Patel reports. "So, we ultimately agreed on a plan to fit her with a fixed implant bridges on the top arch and individual *dental implants* with crowns in the lower arch where she was missing teeth or had teeth removed."

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 single crown that is cemented or screwed onto the 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.

Dr. Patel began working toward that goal in June 2022 by performing a thorough cleaning of Alaina's gums. This was done to ensure a good foundation for the restorative work that began a few months later with the removal of all of Alaina's failing teeth.

"Our philosophy is to not remove healthy gums, teeth or bone, so we only removed the teeth that were not restorable," Dr. Patel informs. "We then performed *bone grafts* on those areas where the teeth were removed and fit her with a temporary denture on the top and a temporary partial on the bottom."

Bone grafting is done to enhance the volume of the jawbone so that it can properly support the implants. In some cases, the grafts are done at the same time the implants are seated but in Alaina's case, Dr. Patel waited several months before seating the implants.

"This case could have been done with a teeth-in-a-day type of approach, but if we had done that, we would have had to destroy too much good bone," Dr. Patel says. "So, we pulled all the bad teeth, performed the bone grafts and fit her with temporary prostheses."

"Another reason to take this slow approach is to help the patient with the cost of the services. Had we done it the other way, all the money would have been due upfront. But this way, the patient is only required to pay for the service that's completed at that time."

Alaina, who had 12 teeth removed from the upper arch and six removed

from her lower arch, was fit with the implants, six in each arch, approximately six months after receiving the temporary prostheses. She then waited four months before receiving her final prostheses.

"We ask the patient to wear the temporary prosthesis for six months for a couple of reasons," Dr. Patel notes. "One is to allow the areas where we removed the failing teeth and placed the implants to heal properly."

"The other is to allow patients time to get used to their new teeth. During that time, if they decide they don't like anything about them, whether it's the bite or the size, shape or color of the teeth, we can change it before fitting them with the permanent prosthesis."

## Loving Her New Smile

By the middle of 2024, Alaina had been fit with both of her permanent prostheses, a 12-tooth implant bridge that runs from molar to molar on the top arch as well as a six individual implants with crowns to replace the teeth that were missing and removed on the bottom arch.

"And I'm loving it," she enthuses. "Before I went to see Dr. Patel, I was very hesitant to smile. I was hesitant to even go out in public because of the way my teeth looked."

"And eating had become a bit of a problem for me. Everything had to be soft because I was afraid I'd break another tooth. But now, I can eat anything, and I love my smile."

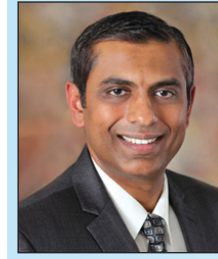
"I smile all the time now because I'm so happy with how this turned out for me. I just can't tell you how fortunate I am to have found Dr. Patel."

"He's a great dentist, and he told me right up front what my options were and what he could do for me. He said it would take some time to get it all done, but it was worth the wait." ■

\*Patient's name changed at her request

## Meet the DOCTOR

Jayraj Patel, DMD, FAGD, FAAID, DABOI/ID



earned his dental degree from the 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 personalized and complete care using the latest technologies and treatment modalities with an aim to build long-term relationships 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 American Academy of Implant Dentistry and Academy of General Dentistry.



JAYRAJ PATEL, DMD, FAGD, FAAID, DABOI/ID

## To Learn MORE

### Call Today

Dr. Jayraj Patel is known for his exceptional, caring attitude toward his patients and work. He is committed to delivering the most advanced, personalized dental care while offering patients a uniquely satisfying experience. Along with the staff of DeLand Implant Dentistry, he welcomes new patients and any questions concerning the range of services, which include cleanings, preventive care, sedation, and cosmetic, restorative, prosthetic and implant dentistry. For an appointment, call or visit the office.

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