

# MISSING UPPER LATERAL INCISORS

**Q** Is it common for teeth to be missing?

**A** It is quite common for various teeth to be missing i.e. to never grow. These are usually the second premolars or upper lateral incisors.

**Q** What are the implications?

**A** If the upper lateral incisors are missing it affects the smile and presents a complicated problem for both the orthodontist and the general dentist.

**Q** What can be done about the missing teeth?

**A** Treatment depends on whether the mouth is overcrowded or not.

**Q** What happens if I have an overcrowded mouth?

**A** If the mouth is overcrowded anyway then the other teeth may be quite close together. The best option here is called **space closure**. The teeth are brought together using a fixed brace.

**Q** Is any further treatment required?

**A** The treatment will leave the canines nearer the front. It is often necessary to then alter the shape of them to make them look like incisors. Yellow canines can be bleached to match the other front teeth.



**Q** How do you change the shape of my teeth?

**A** The shape of your canines are often changed by reducing the pointed tips and adding white filling to square them off. No false teeth are needed.

**Q** What happens if my mouth is not crowded?

**A** The best solution here is to fit a fixed brace to move the canines back to their usual place. This will open up the spaces at the front usually occupied by the incisors.

**Q** What can be done to fill the gap?

**A** False teeth can be made to fill the gap and complete the smile. The false teeth are normally a denture to start with fitted by your orthodontist, but adhesive (stick-on) bridges can be made later by your own dentist.



In the long term if implants are being considered they will need to be planned from the beginning of treatment. This is to ensure the roots of the teeth are far enough apart for implants.