

# John's story

I was 17 when I had my teeth taken out, and for years my dentures didn't give me any bother. But over time, my mouth shrank, and it got more and more uncomfortable to be wearing dentures that were a bad fit.

For the last ten years, the issues I was suffering from ill-fitting dentures were overwhelming and having a massive impact on my life. It wasn't just difficult to eat, my teeth being loose also affected my speech, and my ability to smile and laugh without worrying they would fall out. It could also be really embarrassing in social and work situations. I used to work as a butcher, and later as an Environmental Health Officer working in food standards. When I went into meetings, I would get very nervous that my teeth might fall out while I was speaking, or that it would be difficult to speak clearly and authoritatively if my dentures were moving around in my mouth.

My diet also suffered. It was difficult to eat healthy foods and I ended up living on sweets, ice cream and crisps. I put on a lot of weight and became unhappy with my body.

There was little dentists could do for me until the CIMI-DENT trial started recruiting at the University Dental Hospital of Manchester and I was invited to take part. As part of the study, I was fitted with mini-implants – small titanium screws that replace the old roots of my teeth and keep my dentures in place. I was nervous at first, going for the appointments, but the staff there are absolutely fantastic and they soon put me at my ease. We didn't just talk about my teeth, we were having a chat about all sorts of things!

There were two dentists working with me as part of the trial and they did a brilliant job fitting the implants. It's just like having my own teeth back; I can hardly believe how much my life has changed! I can eat, speak and laugh again without worrying about how my dentures look or feel. I had already started to lose weight before the trial, but the new teeth have made that even easier. I'm eating steak and apples again instead of all the junk food. Altogether, I've lost almost seven stone!

*Taking part in research has been a very positive experience for me. It's given me a new lease on life and put the smile back on my face.*