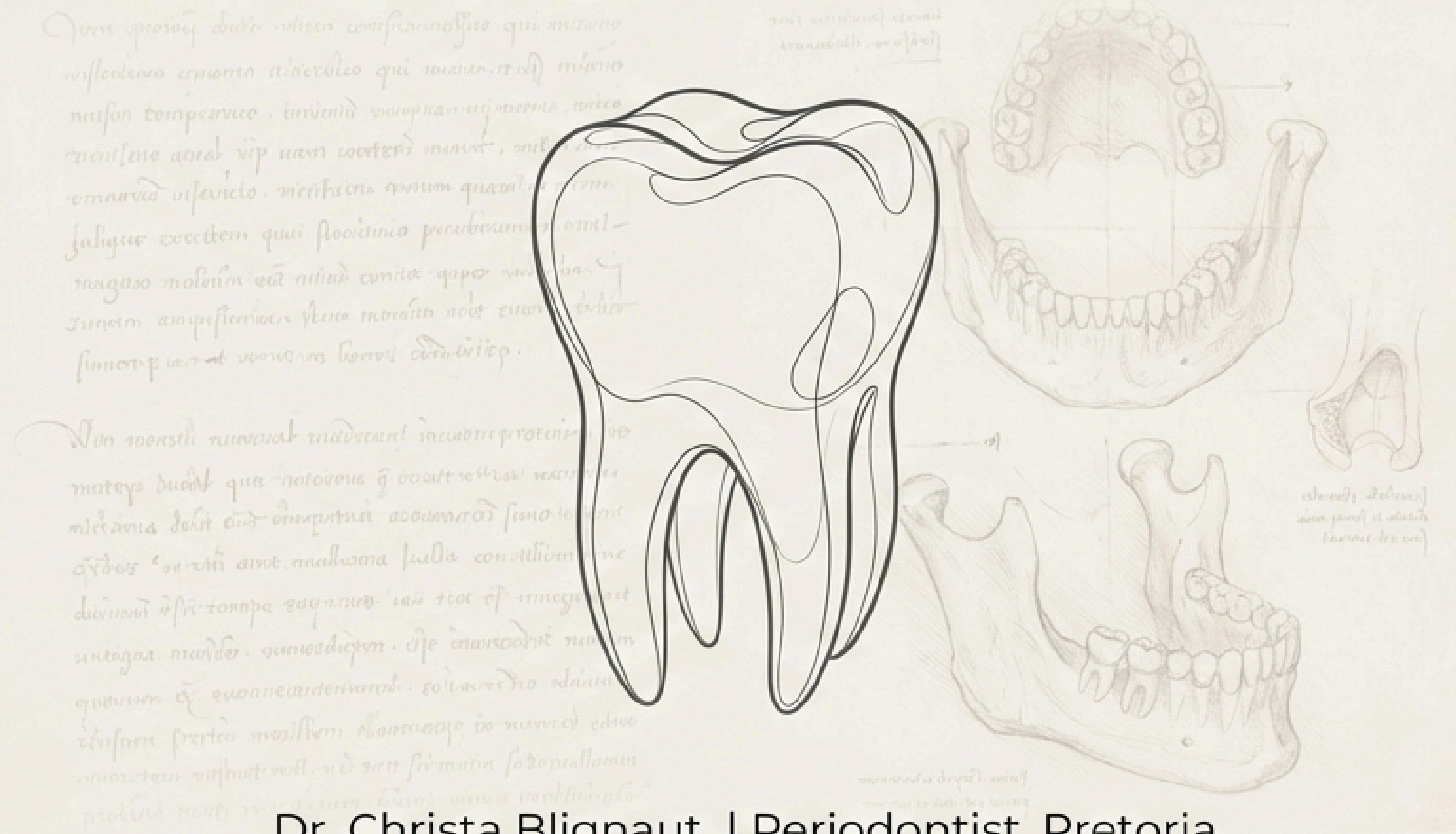


# The Evolution of Dentistry

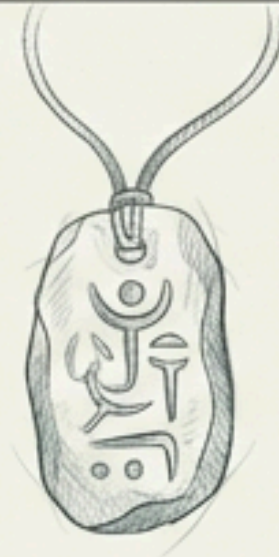
A journey through time, science, and care.



Dr. Christa Blignaut | Periodontist, Pretoria

Dentistry did not begin in  
clinics. It began in survival.

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# The Dawn of Dental Care.

From Sumerian texts blaming “**tooth worms**” (5000 BC) to Egyptian healers mixing honey and herbs, early dentistry was a blend of magic and desperate remedies.

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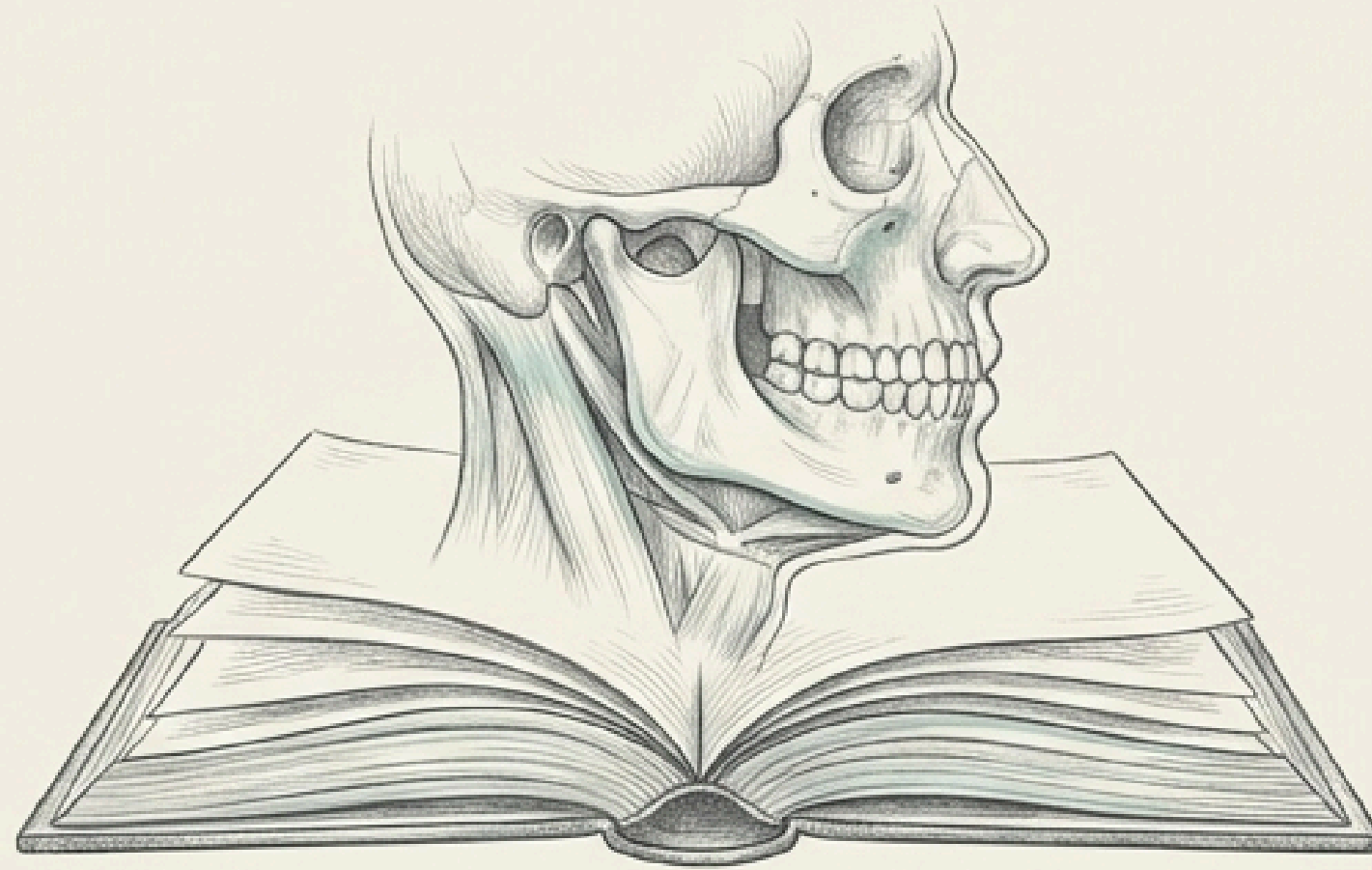
Yet, the desire to heal was profound. Hesy-Ra (c. 2600 BC) is remembered as the first to focus specifically on the teeth, earning the title ‘**Greatest of those who deal with teeth.**’

**For centuries,** dentistry belonged to the **barber-surgeons.** It was a trade of mechanics, not a science of medicine.

Without a true understanding of disease, the primary solution to infection was simple: extraction.

“*Appointments came with a haircut... and bravery.*”





In 1728, French surgeon Pierre Fauchard changed everything. By publishing *Le Chirurgien Dentiste*, he transformed the field from a mysterious, closely guarded craft into a structured medical science. For the first time, anatomy, pathology, and early restorations were meticulously documented.

The mid-1800s brought the greatest gift to the healing arts: nitrous oxide (1844) and ether (1846).

Dentistry ceased to be an exercise in endurance. It became humane, allowing practitioners to operate with precision and care rather than haste.



“For the first time, patients could stay.”



## In 1896, the invisible became visible.

Following the discovery of X-rays, early pioneers captured the first human dental radiographs. This technology allowed us to see beyond the crown of the tooth, revealing the intricate, hidden world of bone, roots, and underlying disease. Diagnosis finally replaced guesswork.



Nineteenth-century pioneers like John Mankey Riggs looked closer at the gums and bone. They realized that tooth loss was not inevitable.



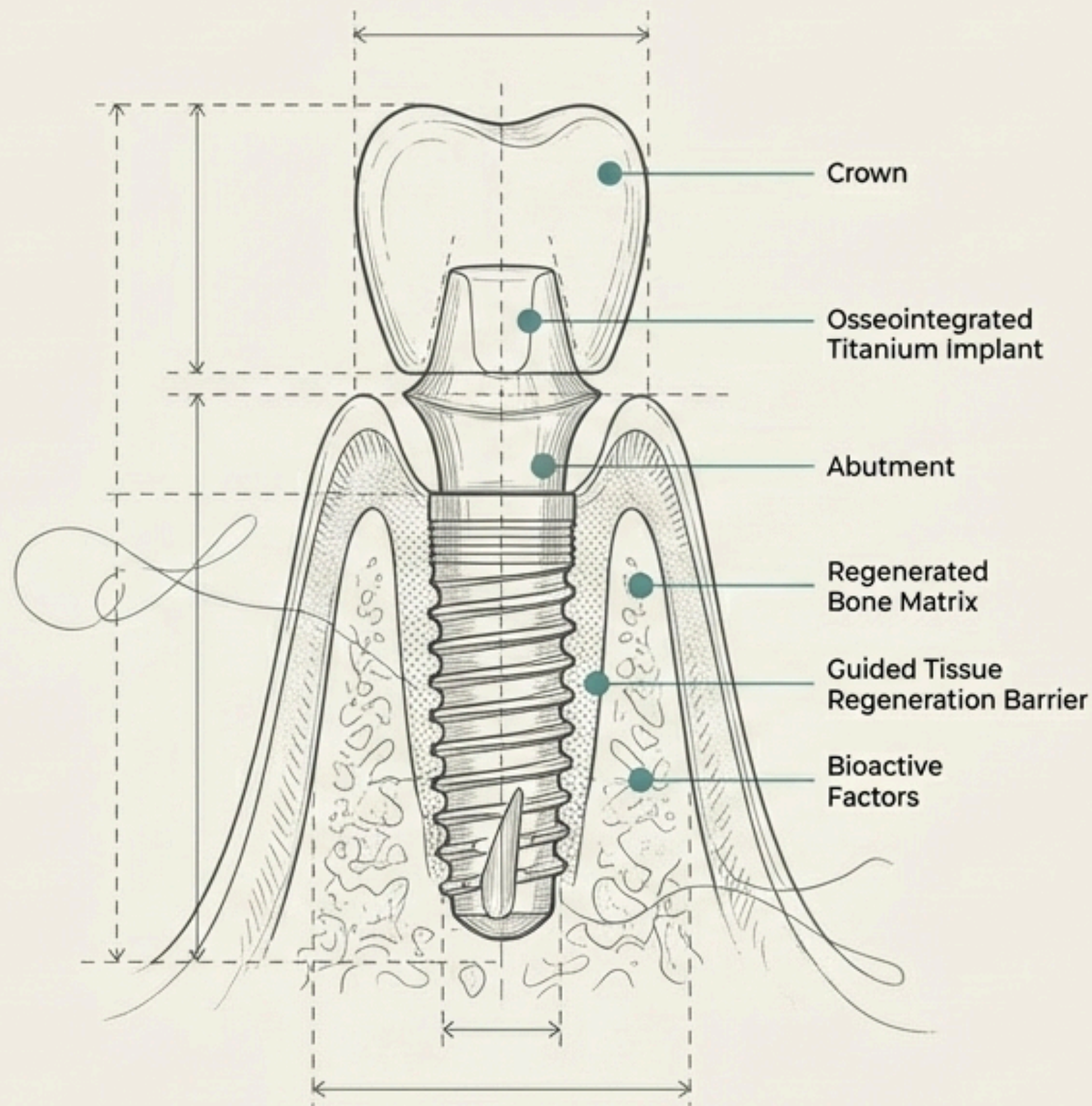
The focus shifted from pulling teeth to treating the tissues that hold them—marking the birth of periodontology.

“Save the tooth. Treat the cause.”

The 20th century proved that disease  
could be stopped before it started.



The introduction of community water fluoridation (1945) and mass oral hygiene education transformed public health globally. The greatest cure turned out to be prevention.



Today, we do not just halt disease; we reverse its damage.

Modern periodontics relies on microsurgery, biologic growth factors, and precise titanium implants (**osseointegration**).

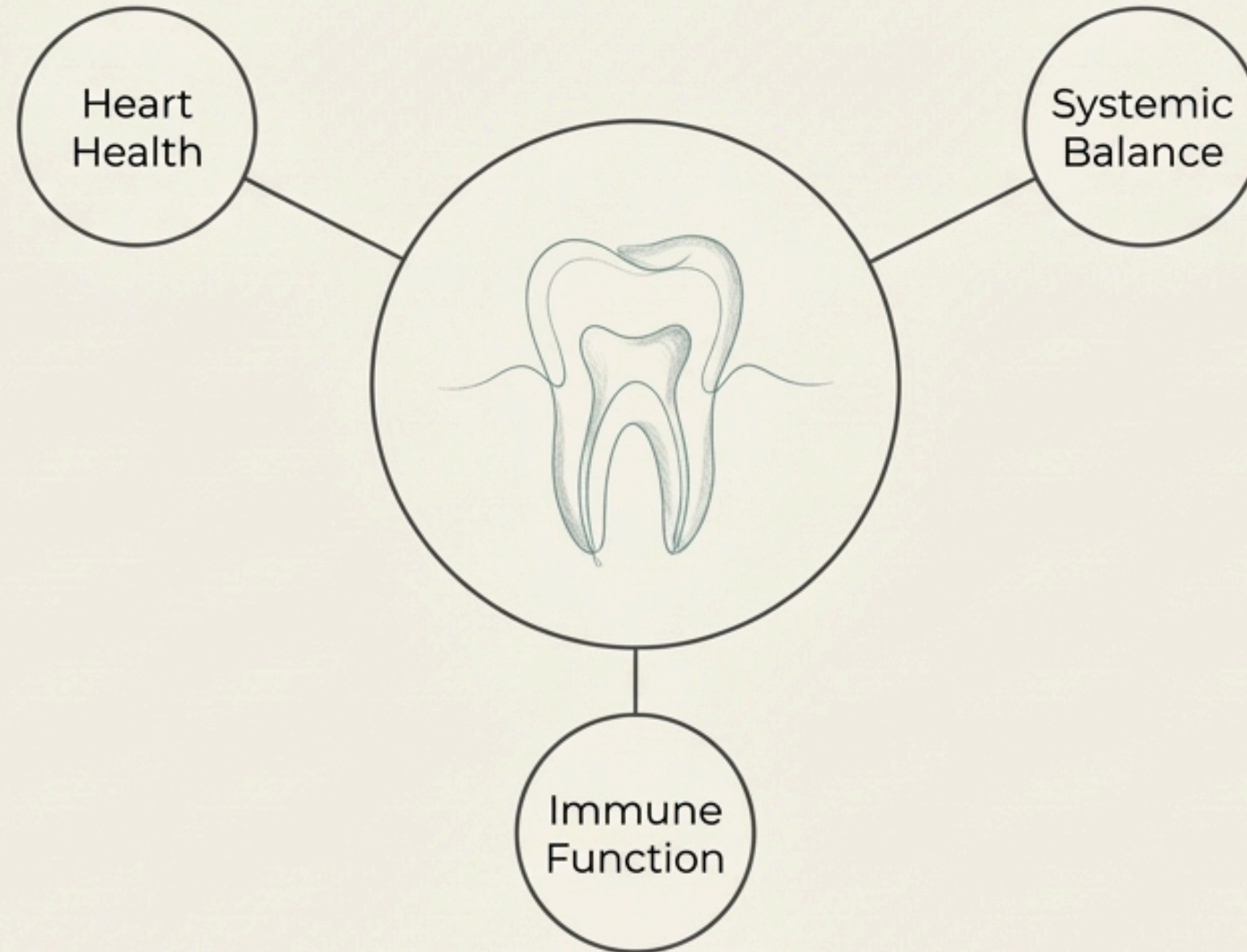
We are no longer just removing tissue—we are regenerating bone and restoring total function.

# Tomorrow's dentistry is already unfolding.

We are looking toward **AI-assisted diagnostics**, **targeted microbiome therapies** to balance oral flora, and **3D-printed tissue engineering**.

The journey of healing never stops.

# The mouth is not separate from the body.



Gum health is whole-body health. Early intervention and precision periodontal care protect not just your smile, but your systemic well-being.

The background features a stylized, light-colored illustration of a tooth and surrounding dental tissue. The tooth is shown in a cross-section, with the crown, root, and pulp chamber visible. The surrounding tissue is depicted with various patterns, including wavy lines and small circular shapes, suggesting a microscopic or histological view. The overall style is clean and professional, with a focus on dental anatomy.

# CB

Dr. Christa Blignaut is a Specialist Periodontist based in Waterkloof Glen, Pretoria.

With a deep respect for the science of preservation, she focuses on precision diagnostics, tissue regeneration, and compassionate patient care.

# Your patients deserve specialised care.

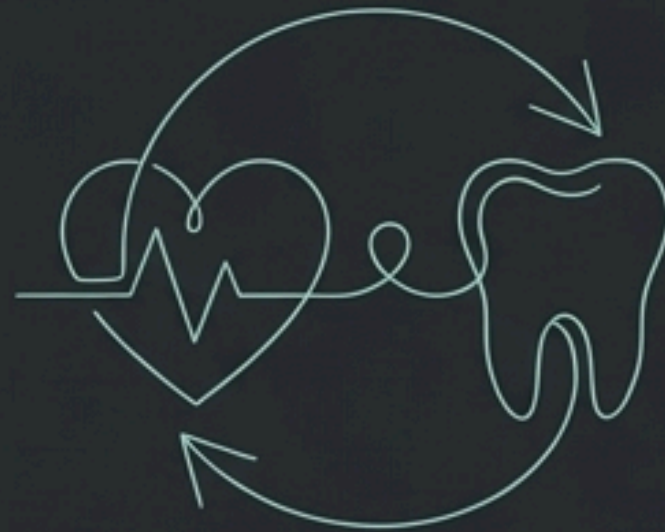
Dentists:

Refer complex  
periodontal cases.



Doctors:

Partner in  
systemic health.



Patients:

Protect what  
matters most.



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