

Instructions after Denture Placement

What may I expect when I first wear my new dentures?

Adjusting to your new dentures will take time. In the beginning, your dentures may feel uncomfortable which should improve as you continue to wear your dentures and they become more “normal” for you and your mouth.

When you first begin to wear your dentures, the dentures may feel loose as you are learning to keep them in place with the muscles of your cheeks and tongue. The dentures may tip when you chew, allowing food or liquids to pass under them. This should improve as you re-train yourself how to chew. Chewing with dentures is much different than chewing with natural teeth and often takes time to feel comfortable. Please be patient!

No matter how thin your dentures are, they may feel bulky and may make your tongue feel crowded and/or may cause a slight gagging sensation. Until your gum ridges are used to supporting dentures, your mouth may feel sore or irritated. Your saliva flow may also increase temporarily. This is all normal and should improve over time.

If you continue to experience difficulty using your dentures, irritation or excessive soreness in any area, please follow-up with your dentist!

Will my appearance change?

When you first get dentures, your facial expression may seem different. A more normal expression will return when the muscles of your cheeks and lips adapt to the dentures.

Dentures often change the shape of your face in a positive way by supporting your facial structure and reducing facial creases.

How will I eat with my new dentures?

When you first learn to use your dentures, it is best to eat soft foods such as mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, well-cooked vegetables, canned fruits, and pureed meats. Make sure to cut your food into small pieces and chew slowly on both sides with your back teeth to keep your dentures from tipping. After a few days, you may advance to foods that require more chewing. You will likely not be able to eat all the tougher or larger sized food items that you were able to eat with natural teeth and food may need to be prepared differently such as cutting your food into small portions. Learning to chew with dentures takes practice and should improve with time!

How will I speak?

Often, wearing dentures may make a difference in the way you pronounce certain words at first. To help overcome any speech difficulties, practice reading aloud. If the denture teeth click together when you talk, speak more slowly. If your dentures become loose when you talk, laugh, cough, or even smile, try to reposition them by closing your teeth together gently and swallowing. Please bring any concerns to the attention of your dentist.

How will I care for my mouth?

Even without natural teeth, you still need to take care of your mouth.

- Each day before inserting your denture, brush your gums, tongue, and palate with a soft-bristled brush, to remove plaque and to stimulate blood flow.
- Every night before bed take your dentures out and put them back in the morning. This gives your mouth a chance to rest and helps maintain oral health.

- Visit your dentist regularly (even if you no longer have any natural teeth) for a complete oral examination. Besides checking your dentures, the dentist will look for signs of oral cancer, and examine your gum ridges, tongue, palate, and jaw joints (TMJ).

How will I care for my dentures?

Handle your dentures carefully! Dropping them (even a few inches into the sink) may break the denture base or a tooth. When cleaning or inserting your dentures, hold them over a towel or a basin half-filled with water. And always keep your dentures out of the reach of children and pets.

For a healthy mouth and fresh breath, clean plaque, and food deposits from your dentures daily. Many special denture-cleaning agents are available (ask your dentist about them), follow their instructions carefully. Some people prefer to brush their denture using hand soap, a mild dishwashing liquid, or baking soda. Avoid using toothpaste made for natural teeth or household cleaners which may be abrasive and damage the denture. **Never use bleach on your dentures!**

Before brushing your dentures, rinse them well to remove any loose particles. Next, apply your preferred cleaner to a moistened soft, denture brush and clean all surfaces of the dentures. Brush the dentures thoroughly but carefully. Scrubbing too hard can damage the plastic parts of the denture or bend metal clasps. Brushing your denture not only helps prevent germs and food from building up on the denture but also helps keep the dentures from becoming permanently stained.

If your dentures become dry, they may change shape. When you take your dentures out at night, place them in a container of denture-cleaning solution or water. **Never put dentures in hot water which may warp the dentures.**

If your dentures break, crack or chip, or if a denture tooth becomes loose, call your dentist immediately and save the broken pieces. Sometimes, the dentist may repair your dentures or may recommend a new set.

Tips for long-term denture success

Although your dentures (if cared for properly) will keep their shape, your mouth continues to change. The bone and gum ridges that support your dentures often recede or shrink. If ridge shrinkage occurs, your dentures will begin to feel loose and less stable, and your ability to chew may decrease.

Prolonged use of ill-fitting dentures may irritate the gums, tongue, and cheeks and cause the ridges of the mouth to shrink to the point where it will be almost impossible to fit them with normal dentures. It is important to identify problems early so you need to **see your dentist regularly**.

Your success in wearing dentures depends on you! With a positive attitude, persistence, and regular check-ups, you can become one of the millions of people who wear dentures successfully.

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