



Your new dentures

Adapting to your dentures

Getting used to the shape of your new dentures takes a considerable amount of time, and most people experience differences and initial difficulties. You may experience some, or all, of the following:

- + Your new dentures may feel large and cumbersome, and may move more than you are used to
- + You may feel you cannot eat easily and food may taste different
- + Your speech may be altered
- + You may feel less confident and more self conscious

These are a normal response to new dentures and will improve over time as you get used to the new shape.

Limitations of dentures

Every person's mouth has a different structure which can affect the retention and stability of the denture. **You therefore need to have realistic expectations of what can be achieved in your individual case.**

Sore spots

Most patients will experience some sore spots in the early stages. If the sore spots are minor, then they will often disappear of their own accord. If they persist or are more severe, then contact the practice – it is likely some minor adjustment by the dentist is needed. Leave the dentures out if need be, but *do ensure you wear them for at least 24 hours before your appointment, so the dentist can see where they are rubbing.*

Tips for coping in the early stages

- + **Wearing your dentures.** For the first few days try to wear your dentures all the time, removing them only for cleaning. After that, it's healthier to leave your dentures *out* at night.
- + **Eating and drinking.** Choose simple foods initially. Avoid hard or sticky foods. Take small bites. Chew slowly and evenly with both sides of the mouth.
- + **Speaking.** Practice speaking in front of the mirror. Bite and swallow before you speak to ensure your teeth are in the right position. As you get used to the new shape of your teeth, your speech will return to normal.
- + **Be patient.** Learning to cope with new dentures takes considerable time, skill, and practice, so don't become disheartened!

Cleaning your dentures

Many people are unaware that plaque bacteria, which normally grows on teeth, can also grow on dentures. This bacteria can be harmful to the mouth or any remaining teeth, and needs to be removed. Follow this 4 point plan each day:

1. **WASH.** Wash your dentures under running water to remove any large deposits. Do this over a sink filled with water to act as a cushion in case you drop your dentures.

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2. **CLEAN.** Clean and brush your dentures with a soft nylon brush or large toothbrush, using special denture paste (eg 'denture-creme') or soap, and warm water. This physically removes any deposits of food or plaque.
3. **SOAK.** Soak your dentures in a cleanser to disinfect it:
 - ✚ **PLASTIC dentures:** 'DENTURAL' is a very effective cleanser available from most chemists. Soak your denture for the recommended time.
 - ✚ **METAL dentures** (or dentures made partly of metal): Use an effervescent cleanser eg Steradent. **However:** avoid cleansers containing hypochlorite eg. Dentural -they turn metal black!!!
4. **RINSE.** Thoroughly rinse your dentures under cold running water to remove any cleanser. Again, do this over a sink filled with water to avoid breakage if they fall.

Keeping your mouth healthy

- ✚ **Mouth hygiene:**
 - **Full denture wearers:** Gently brush your gums with a soft toothbrush and water to keep them clean
 - **Partial denture wearers:** Clean your remaining teeth in the usual way, using a good quality electric or manual toothbrush. Concentrate at the gum margins where the teeth and gum join. Use short side to side movements. Brush for 2 minutes. Clean in-between the teeth each day using 'TePe' bottle brushes/floss. Rinse daily with a fluoride mouth rinse.
- ✚ **Leave your dentures out at night where possible:** Pt's who wear dentures at night are much more likely to suffer from a condition called "denture stomatitis" – a yeast-like infection of the mouth. Try to leave your dentures out of the mouth if possible, placing them in a suitable container filled with cold water to prevent them drying out.
- ✚ **Do not smoke:** 95% of cases of mouth cancer are smoking related. Smoking is also a major cause of gum disease and tooth loss so will affect any teeth you have remaining. Nicotine also stains dentures and teeth.
- ✚ **Attend for a check-up at least once a year.** This will keep you registered with the practice should a future problem arise, and will also give enable the dentist to check the health of your mouth, including an oral cancer check.

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