

Denture : Post-Op and Care sheet

One thing we always tell new denture wearers to expect is that there is a learning curve to using them, it is something new, something foreign to your mouth and tongue. As time progresses, your confidence in and with them will grow. The key to enjoying their long term benefits is to stick with them, come in for adjustments when needed and take care of them. We always do our best to provide you with a well-fitting, esthetically pleasing, solid functioning denture. We feel confident that after repeated use and necessary adjustments you will enjoy years of quality use from them.

What to expect: Removable Complete, Partial, Implant and Transitional Dentures, Flippers

Cleaning. Being that dentures are removable, cleaning them is a simple process. They can be cleaned using numerous commercial products or even household ones.

- Soaking tablets can be used by placing the denture in warm (never hot) water and adding a tablet that will fizz and clean the denture, eliminate bacteria and odors.
- Additionally non-abrasive denture cleaning pastes, creams, mild dish or hand soap can be applied and gently scrubbed with a soft denture brush (we do not recommend using normal toothpaste as it contains abrasives that will eventually remove the shine from your denture). Toothpaste is reserved for the steps below containing natural teeth and gum tissue.
- While the entire denture should always be cleaned
 - Partial denture users should take special care to clean any parts of the partial that contact natural teeth as well as the natural teeth themselves.
 - Dentures, gums and remaining natural teeth should be cleaned on a daily basis to prevent any further decay, hygiene is still important whether you have a few remaining teeth or none.
 - Complete denture users should brush their gums with a regular toothbrush once per day when you take the denture out to clean it. This will help toughen the gum tissue and keep it clean.
- It is not recommended that you sleep with your dentures in at night. While out you can leave them soaking in a water and mouthwash solution or in a denture cleaning solution.
 - Should you decide to sleep with your dentures in, clean them at night before bed and in the morning.

Chewing. During your first adjustment visit we will also check and adjust (if necessary) your new bite. This too may not feel accurate immediately after receiving a new denture - being there may be some swelling from the sore spots, the bite may shift as a result and be temporarily inaccurate. This should be resolved (if not on its own) by the second adjustment appointment once everything has settled into place and calmed down.

Sore Spots. The tissues of your mouth will most likely develop a few sore spots within the first 24-48 hours after you put your new dentures in. It is a hard plastic type material against soft gum tissue. Please continue to wear them, this is perfectly normal and is actually extremely useful for us to aid in locating problem areas. An initial adjustment visit will be made for you during this time period along with a second appointment the following week. These two appointments will usually eliminate any sore spots or sources of discomfort. From here, things should start to feel better.

The First Few Weeks. Dentures will always feel foreign when new and first placed in your mouth. Several weeks may be required for you to become accustomed to them. We ask that you use them as much as possible during this time, even if they feel funny or like you have a mouth full of marbles, it will pass - you can ask any long time denture wearer yourself.

Upper and Lower Dentures. Upper dentures will usually remain comfortably in place due to a suction effect on the tissue. Lower dentures will have a different type of retention by wrapping around the tissue, but it will usually not have that same suction effect. If retention becomes an issue, instead of using denture adhesives we recommend an office visit as a re-line of the denture base may prove more beneficial to you.

Implant supported dentures. Implant supported dentures will give superior retention over non-implant supported. However, the same rules apply and you still need to remove them and clean them just as described for other dentures. In addition, brush the surface of your gums and around the implants with a soft toothbrush and low abrasive toothpaste.

6+ months. As time progresses, you will get used to and more comfortable with your new denture. The major downfall to areas of your mouth not having any teeth is that your jawbones and gums will shrink, it is a natural process of the body. Due to this shrinkage, we recommend having your new dentures, remaining teeth and oral tissues evaluated every six months. This will allow us to inspect the tissue, check for any developing tooth decay and perform a relining or rebasing of the dentures if necessary. Wearing a poorly fitting denture is not just inconvenient for talking and eating it can accelerate severe bone loss and lead to chronic gum disease.

Please follow these suggestions, they are for your own benefit and will help you get the greatest benefit and years of use from your new denture. We look forward to helping you adjust to and enjoy your new dentures!

Post-Op Instructions – Immediate Dentures

Having an immediate denture by default means that extractions have been performed, usually numerous extractions. There are a few important guidelines to follow here.

Smoking : You must not smoke for at least 5 days, it will lead to numerous other problems - Please listen to this advice.

- Smoking puts you at a greater risk for a dry socket. This is very painful infection of the bone that will require further treatment and medicine.
- Your body's natural healing ability is impaired by smoking, leading to longer healing time.
- Smoking increases your chances of tissue infection (not just dry socket)

First 24 hours : The immediate denture will be inserted before you leave the office. You MUST leave this in place for the following 24 hours - we will remove it together at your next appointment the following day.

- If you remove the denture before this time period, you may not be able to re-insert it, nor will we. Swelling will occur and prevent the re-insertion for a few days. Any pain experienced is due to the extractions and not the denture. Removing it will not provide any additional relief.
- The denture will not only give you new teeth, but act like a bandaid and keep the underlying surgical site safe and control swelling. However, it needs to remain in place to be effective.
- It will apply pressure to limit bleeding (however some may be normal - saliva will be seen as tinted red)
- Swelling, bruising, discomfort, slight bleeding and fever are all considered normal.
 - Following the procedure, please keep an **ice pack** wrapped in a moist towel on the cheek of the affected area 20 minutes on, 20 off. Do this for the remainder of the day, it will help reduce swelling and discomfort.
 - Any swelling or bruising will reach its peak in the first 48-72 hours.
 - Ice packs should be applied for the first **24 hours** only.
 - Following that switch to using a **warm** compress to decrease symptoms.
 - Please take any pain medication and antibiotics as indicated.
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- You should rinse gently before bed with the denture in place with 1 teaspoon table salt + 1 cap full of mouthwash both dissolved in 8oz of room temperature water. Do not swish vigorously or spit, simply roll the solution around your mouth and let it pour out into the sink . This will reduce bacteria and any bad taste.

After 24 hours : (day 2-7 after followup appointment) Oral hygiene is extremely important during the entire healing process. It will help prevent infections in the fragile tissue underneath.

- The denture is now ok to be removed following meals and before bed time to clean it, but do not leave it out for more than 10-15 minutes. Regardless whether you eat or not, remove the denture at least 3x a day to clean it and again before bed.
 - The denture will be re-inserted after cleaning, you will sleep with the denture in place until your next appointment at 7 days. The only time it should be removed is for cleaning.
 - Your diet for the first 24-48 hours should be liquid and or very soft nutritious food (mashed potatoes, yogurt, eggs) (avoid straws, anything hot or with seeds) after this initial period, you may progress to more solid foods as you feel comfortable eating them, still avoiding hard, crunchy food for the first week. Eating and drinking are very important to healing.
 - When removing the denture, always remove it using two hands over a sink filled with water. This is important, they can be slippery so use caution. The water in the sink is to prevent accidents incase it should drop, landing in the water will cushion it to safety.

Cleaning : Scrub the denture under running **cold water** with a denture brush and cleanser (do not use toothpaste).

- Ensure it has been thoroughly rinsed clean and place the denture in a glass of **cold water**.
- Gently rinse your mouth with 1 teaspoon of table salt + 1 cap mouthwash dissolved in 8 oz of warm water
 - This cleaning process and the salt water rinse will help keep your mouth clean and infection down.
- Re-insert the denture and brush any remaining teeth as normal, do not attempt to brush or brush near the site of the treatment.
- Rinse again with salt water solution.

After 7 days. You will continue to wear the denture (except for taking it out to clean), we will have you return to the office. At this time we will check for proper healing, remove remaining sutures and make adjustments to your bite.

- We need to wait for healing to occur first to ensure the bite is adjusted accurately.
- From this point you should begin removing your dentures at night when you sleep.
 - Place the dentures in a glass of clean water over night or add a cleansing tablet.
 - this prevents them from drying out.
 - It is recommended to not sleep with your denture, this allows your gums to breath and rest at night. Should you decide to sleep with your dentures in from this point, make sure you clean them well before bed and in the morning.
 - Cleaning regimen switches to that for cleaning complete and partial dentures.

6 + months. After the healing phase has progressed and we have made adjustments, from this point you should notice a great improvement in their comfort and function. However, tissues and bone continue to remodel for a number of months following extraction, as a result you may notice the denture becoming gradually looser.

- At this point, depending on which type of denture you chose before the procedure a more permanent solution should be performed.
 - A conventional immediate denture can be laboratory re-lined for a better fit.
 - An interim immediate denture should be replaced with a new set and kept as a backup.

Please follow these recommendations, the ultimate success of this type of treatment relies heavily on your cooperation, it is for your own benefit. We have given you these specific oral and written instructions to maximize your healing and comfort while minimizing any post-op complications. Following these directions will help you get the greatest benefit from todays procedure. We look forward to helping you adjust to and enjoy your new dentures.