

Complete Implant Supported Bridge - Locator

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE AND ONGOING CARE

Your new prosthesis has been custom made to fit the shape of your gums and attachments have been placed to support and retain your prosthesis securely to the implants. However, the process of processing acrylic does introduce some small irregularities and so slight imperfections of fit are likely and hence “rubbing” or “sore spots” are to be expected in the first weeks of use, even with attachments being fitted.

From day one, you should think of your new prosthesis with the analogy of a new set of fine leather shoes. Your prosthesis will fit you well, but like new shoes, if you walked in them too much, too soon (before they soften up), you will see blisters. The same applies with your new prosthesis. Even if it feels comfortable, do not try to eat a regular diet too soon, or it will cause more rubbing and soreness and possible biting of your cheek and tongue. Instead you should cut your food into small pieces and eat a very soft diet for the first two weeks, to ensure your gums and cheeks become accustomed to the new acrylic fitting surface, and to allow you to learn how to use this new prosthesis. You will chew best with your new prosthesis if you can learn to chew your foods on both the left and right sides simultaneously (we appreciate that this is not easy!).

MANAGING SORE SPOTS

When an area of gum becomes sore, remove your prosthesis and rinse with salty water. Allow the gums to rest for up to two hours before reinserting the prosthesis and wearing it again for a few more hours. Repeat this process whilst the sore spots persist. If the spots are not gradually improving, then you will need an adjustment, so please telephone us to make an appointment. Please do not attempt to do your own adjustment.

CLEANING AND CARE:

As the acrylic of the prosthesis is fabricated in a water bath, the finished prosthesis retains some moisture content and hence is susceptible to drying out when not in your mouth. Therefore, it is important that the prosthesis is kept in a humid environment when not being worn. This can be a zip-lock bag or Tupper Ware container with a drop of water in it, or the prosthesis can be fully submerged in a container of water. However you achieve it, please keep the prosthesis moist to ensure it does not dry out, crack or warp. Ideally, wear your prosthesis full time.

Your prosthesis must be cleaned each day with a small-head toothbrush and liquid soap. Do not use toothpaste (which forms a scum) or harsh abrasives (Ajax etc.). Once a week, or more regularly, you may like to use a denture soak solution (such as Polydent or Sterident) to assist to clean your prosthesis. You should aim to remove your prosthesis after each meal, and rinse it, and once each day, give it a thorough clean as described above. If you wear your prosthesis overnight whilst sleeping, your gums will need a rest too, and saliva must wash over the gums to prevent bacterial or fungal infection. It is therefore important that you brush your implant abutments and gums twice a day, just as if they were real teeth, and this must be done in addition to cleaning your prosthesis.

FUTURE CARE:

Once your natural teeth are removed, the gums will begin to shrink as the jaw bone below begins to re-shape. Most of the changes occur in the first six months after the extractions. However, gums continue to change and so your prosthesis will become less well fitting, over time and you may progressively see more food accumulation around it. To maintain your prosthesis, you should plan for at least annual reviews to monitor the health of the gums and detect further shrinkage. The implants also need to be checked with x-rays. Early detection will mean that a loose prosthesis can be

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corrected by Relining as needed. A Reline of the prosthesis will improve its fit. This is a separate procedure with its own item code and cost. Late detection of gum shrinkage will usually necessitate a new prosthesis be made instead.

You should expect your prosthesis to last 5-7 years on average, including periodic relining, before any major follow-up treatment is needed. Harsh cleaning or a diet high in staining, hard or acidic foods may decrease this life expectancy. When the first major future care item is needed, it will be a replacement of the acrylic and teeth on the existing prosthesis. This will be done when there is sufficient wear and staining of the existing prosthesis. Again, its timing will depend on individual circumstances and this has its own item codes and costs. The nylon attachments in your bridge will also wear with time and you will notice your bridge becomes less retentive. This normally occurs over 6 months to a 2 year time frame, again depending on individual circumstances. When the bridge becomes too loose, please return to see us and we will replace the nylons. This is a relatively inexpensive same day procedure.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at any time if you have any questions about the use and care of your new prosthesis.

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