

Complete Dentures

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE AND ONGOING CARE

Your new dentures have been custom made to fit the shape of your gums. However, the process of making acrylic dentures 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.

From day one, you should think of your new dentures with the analogy of a new set of fine leather shoes. Your dentures 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 dentures. Even if they feel comfortable, do not try to eat a regular diet too soon, or they will cause more rubbing and soreness. Instead you should cut your food into small pieces and eat a very soft diet for the first two weeks, to ensure your gums become accustomed to the new acrylic fitting surface, and to allow you to learn how to use these new dentures. You will chew best with your dentures if you can learn to chew your foods on both the left and right sides simultaneously. Dentures are not designed for biting on the front teeth, and doing so will make them tip and become loose.

MANAGING SORE SPOTS:

When an area of gum becomes sore, remove your dentures and rinse with salty water. Allow the gums to rest for up to two hours before reinserting the dentures and wearing them 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 dentures is fabricated in a water bath, the finished dentures retain some moisture content and hence are susceptible to drying out when not in your mouth. Therefore, it is important that the dentures are 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 dentures can be fully submerged in a container of water. However you achieve it, please keep the dentures moist to ensure they do not dry out, crack or warp.

Your dentures 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 dentures. You should aim to remove your dentures after each meal, and rinse them, and once each day, give them a thorough clean as described above. Do not wear your dentures overnight whilst sleeping, as your gums need a rest too, and saliva must wash over the gums to prevent bacterial or fungal infection.

FUTURE CARE:

Once 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, over time, gums continue to change and so your dentures will become less well fitting, and eventually become quite loose. To maintain your dentures, you should plan for at least annual reviews to monitor the health of the gums and detect further shrinkage. Early detection will mean that loose dentures can be corrected by Relining. A Reline of the dentures will improve their fit. This is a separate procedure with its own item code and cost. Late detection of gum shrinkage will usually necessitate new dentures be made instead. You should expect your dentures to last 5-7 years on average, including periodic Relining. Some patients will find their new dentures are still not as “tight” as they may have hoped, or that over time, they become very loose as progressive gum shrinkage occurs. In most instances, it is possible to place two dental implants to significantly improve denture retention and you are welcome to speak to us about this option.

perfect smiles