

# Complete Overdentures

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE AND ONGOING CARE

Your new Overdentures have been custom made to fit the shape of your gums and attachments have been placed to help hold your dentures more securely. 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, especially prior to your attachments being fitted.

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.

### ATTACHMENTS:

After a 2 week settling in period, we will connect the attachments and this will make your dentures more secure. Please note, attachments do not enable you to chew harder or better, but merely secure your denture so that it is not as loose. Attachments start quite tight and gradually become progressively more loose with time. Eventually, they will not be tight enough to be useful, and you should then return to see us to have the nylons replaced. This is a relatively small cost, and replacement is usually indicated each 6-18 months depending on your individual circumstances.

### CLEANING AND CARE:

Your support teeth with their gold-cap ball attachments must be brushed twice a day with toothpaste, just like natural teeth normally are.

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.

perfect smiles



### **CARE OF THE ATTACHMENTS**

Always inspect the inner surface of your attachments as well. A soft toothbrush or wood tooth pick can be used to remove any accumulated food. Do not use a metal implement for this. If your attachments seem to become loose suddenly, it may be that some food debris has accumulated in the nylon housing in your denture, and this should be cleaned out as described. If your attachments become progressively too loose, then most likely, your attachments need to be replaced.

### **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 will 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 overdentures to last 5-7 years on average, including periodic Relining. If you wear your dentures overnight or do not clean the support teeth well enough, you may find decay occurs around the gold-cap ball attachments, this may lead to loss of the support teeth. If this happens, replacement with a dental implant may still be possible.