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New Dentures Information and Advice



What is a denture?

Dentures replace lost or missing teeth so you are able to enjoy a healthy diet and smile with confidence. Dentures are made of either acrylic (plastic) or metal (usually cobalt chrome). There



Acrylic Full Dentures

are also some newer flexible acrylic materials. We usually use one called Valplast. A 'complete' or 'full' denture replaces all the

natural teeth in either upper or lower jaw.

A full denture fits snugly over your gums and is supported by the jaw. Due to the unstable nature of gums and continuous shrinking of the jaw over time your denture may become loose and need to be replaced or relined. A partial denture fills the spaces left by missing teeth. It may be fastened to your natural teeth with metal or plastic clasps.



Acrylic dentures are less expensive generally than metal ones. Metal dentures do not cover as much



on the inside of the mouth as plastic, they have a custom cast framework which is thinner and can be very light. They are

generally designed to reduce plaque buildup on natural teeth. Valplast dentures are very light and flexible and tend to fit the mouth very securely, however they are more costly than acrylic, not suitable for all situations, and need to be maintained very carefully or they will deteriorate quickly.

New denture issues

New to dentures? Not sure what to expect? Dentures are a very personal thing; the first couple of weeks after getting dentures can take a bit of

getting used to it. You might feel some pain and discomfort, but as each day passes you should gradually start to get used to the different sensation in your mouth.

Full mouth feeling First-time denture wearers often say that their dentures are too big, pushing their lips forward. This feeling is completely normal. The mouth is really sensitive and any changes will always feel odd but, once your mouth gets used to the dentures, this feeling will go. Wearing the dentures at night (24 hours a day) for the first 2 or 3 days can really help you accommodate to your new dentures, however once you are used to them we strongly recommend you remove them before going to bed. (See our Denture Care leaflet)

Soreness and irritation A certain amount of soreness and irritation is normal while adjusting to new dentures. You should see your dentist if the pain continues so that they can modify the denture slightly. Make sure you wear the denture for the 24 hours before your appointment so the dentist can see exactly where your denture is rubbing. Warm salt-water mouthwash or Corsodyl gel can help with sore areas. Denture adhesive can be used in new dentures to help seal out irritating food particles and help stabilize your teeth giving you more confidence eating and speaking in the first few weeks.

More saliva than usual This is normal for some people and over time, as your mouth accepts your new dentures this should disappear so please don't worry.

Gag reflex If you find that you gag when putting in or taking out your dentures it's simply a reaction to putting an unfamiliar object in your mouth. The more comfortable and relaxed you become with your dentures, the less this will happen. Gagging can also sometimes be caused by having a denture that extends slightly too far back into your mouth so if this continues, speak to your dentist who may be able to make some small changes.

Eating? This sometimes takes a little practice! Start with soft food cut into small pieces. Chew slowly using both sides of your mouth at the same time to stop the denture moving. As you become more used to your denture add other foods until you get back to your normal diet



And talking?

Pronouncing certain words may take practice. Read out loud and repeat difficult words. (Maybe do this on

your own!) If you find that your dentures occasionally slip when you laugh cough or smile, reposition them by gently biting down and swallowing. If this happens a lot come and see us.

Should I use fixative? Dentures are custom made to fit your mouth and ideally you shouldn't need a denture fixative. However, some people prefer to use a fixative to give them extra confidence especially when getting used to new dentures or if they start to become loose, particularly if you have worn 'immediate' dentures (fitted straight after extractions) for some time. Sometimes the shape of the bone supporting the dentures is less than ideal especially with full lower dentures and fixative helps. The upper jaw has more "suction" to hold it in place, but a lower full denture may feel 'wobblier' because it has to be balanced between your cheeks and your tongue. We enclose a sample of fixative for you to try.

Denture care

Dentures require the same, if not greater level of care than natural teeth. This is due to the fact that they provide a perfect place for bacteria (in plaque) to grow and if they are not maintained properly the dentures can:

- Warp and bend out of shape, regardless of the type of denture you may have (acrylic or cobalt chrome) once the shape is lost, it cannot be undone and the denture has to be replaced.
- Lose their visual appeal, they will darken and will not closely match the colour of the gums as they would normally do.
- Lead to bad breath, insufficient cleaning will mean odour producing bacteria are not removed thoroughly.
- Cause a fungal infection, under the denture called denture stomatitis. This tends to occur more frequently when the denture is not removed at night.

Cleaning and storing your dentures.

Be careful! Dentures may break if you drop them. Try to clean your dentures over a soft surface (eg a folded towel or filled sink of water). Brush your

denture with either a small soft toothbrush or electric toothbrush



head (reserved for your denture) or a specially designed denture brush with a non-abrasive



toothpaste, soap or denture paste. Being careful to clean the fitting/inside surface as well as the teeth.

You can soak your dentures overnight in a denture bath in water alone or with with a fizzy denture cleaner (eg Sterident). This will remove stubborn stains and leave your denture feeling fresh and clean

You can also use an ultrasonic cleaner (available from Amazon £10-£30- We can order in for you. Please ask) Always follow manufacturer's instructions) Do NOT use bleach, hot or boiling water as it will permanently damage your



dentures. Before inserting dentures in the morning brush them again to remove any loosened debris.

Caring for your mouth

Even with full dentures you need to take good care of your mouth and still have regular dental health checks. Brush your gums and the roof of your mouth with a soft brush and clean your tongue with a tongue brush or scraper twice a day. This removes harmful bacteria and encourages blood circulation. If you wear partial dentures it is even more important that you remove the plaque from every surface of every tooth everyday as advised by your dentist and hygienist. This will help prevent gum disease and tooth decay and help you keep your remaining teeth.

How long will my dentures last?

If you look after your dentures well they should last several years. However, dentures will need to be relined or remade because of normal wear or a change in the shape of your mouth. This happens especially if you have had dentures fitted straight after teeth have been removed (immediate dentures). Loose dentures can cause pain sores and infections and make eating or talking more difficult. It is important to replace them before they cause major problems.

Are dentures my only option?

No. Bridges, dental implants and implant-supported dentures (making them very secure) are other options that may be suitable for you and you may want to consider them. Ask your dentist for further information.