

YOUR NEW DENTURES

First and foremost, please be aware that dentures are replacement for no teeth and not for your natural teeth i.e. they will never perform like the original natural teeth! Just as crutches are for no legs. You cannot run with them! This is a compromise. Please accept this limitation. Implants are closest to having your natural teeth.

Bedding in: New dentures are bound to feel strange and quite a 'mouthful'. A correctly made denture is usually well extended. Initially, patients often comment they feel "Big". Generally speaking each replacement denture will be bigger than the predecessor simply as you may have lost more gum/bone which needs to be made up. We should resist the temptation to start cutting them short too quickly as the dentures were made from a new impression of your mouth which is almost certainly different to how it was a few years ago,

Using dentures is a skill. Like any other skill, it takes time to develop. Some people will be faster than others. You may feel self-conscious while your cheeks, lips and tongue learn to control the dentures. This may be more of a problem with the lower denture, which has less suction and the tongue plays with it. In time most people adapt although some patients will struggle.

Eating: May be difficult at first because you have to control the dentures as well as the food. Don't be discouraged by a few initial failures. Start with food that is not sticky and does not need hard chewing. It helps to cut food into very small pieces. While adapting to new dentures, it is easiest first to learn to swallow, then to chew, and finally to bite off food.

Chew: Slowly on both sides of your mouth – this will help balance dentures. Excess saliva flow and a reduction in taste should return within a month.

Speech: Particular S sounds may be altered until the tongue and lips learn to adapt to the space change in your mouth and restore your voice to normal.

Appearance: You may be worried that you look different. In fact, only people who know you very well will notice any change at all.

Soreness: This response is usually short lived. Any new denture is liable to cause a few sore spots, which will be dealt with at the next visit. Take the dentures out or if necessary whilst eating. However, it would help locate sore areas if you could leave them in for an hour or two before the review visit.

Persevere: You will not get used to your new dentures if you keep switching from the new set to the old. To help the dentist find the exact place the denture is rubbing, please wear the denture for at least a few hours before the visit.

Give your gums a rest: It is normally best to remove your dentures at night and keep them in water. If the dentures are allowed to dry out, or put into hot water, they will warp and lose their fit.

Cleaning: It is very important for the health of your mouth that the dentures are kept spotlessly clean or the gums may become red and sore.

- Try to clean your dentures after every meal if possible.
 - You can use a soft toothbrush or soft nailbrush, soap and water, or denture cleaning paste.
 - Dentures are fragile so handle with care. Clean them over a bowl or basin of water so that if they fall they do not break.
- Proprietary denture cleaners:** Are not essential if your denture does not pick up stains. Always brush the dentures first especially on the inside surface. In some patients (probably due to diet/habits) some dentures will stain more than others. Professional maintenance may be necessary at additional cost.

- Any cleaner used must be thoroughly rinsed off the dentures before you wear them again.
- Don't use bleach, borax or abrasive cleaners that will scratch and discolour the dentures. Metal-components may get damaged with some cleaning products.

Check-ups with your own dentist: Please get your your mouth checked once a year, even if your dentures are perfectly satisfactory.

In partial dentures, there may be some metal visible components. Also, where lip line is high, edges of the dentures may show. If you do not wear your dentures every day, there is a risk that the dentures may not fit due to movements of natural teeth. The quality of fit tends to worsen over time, due to the changes that occur in the mouth.

Like everything that is subject to forces, dentures (or components of), will eventually fatigue and fracture over time. Repair or replacement may need to be considered. This will be at additional cost. Wear of denture teeth is expected over time.

Despite the best efforts of clinician, technician and the denture-wearer, some people will never be able to satisfactorily adapt to dentures.

It is also worth noting that patients find more difficulty in getting used to a lower denture as often the tongue, which is a very powerful muscle, will displace the denture. In contrast in the upper jaw, the extra coverage palate actually helps the support (provided by extra coverage) and retention. Also, if you have one removable denture opposing fixed teeth, the denture will move. Eventually these patients adapt as they chew with "chopping" rather than sideways chewing movement which is responsible for the displacement and sometime resultant pain. There is no easy solution to this problem other than providing extra support with implants