

# Denture guide for a healthy you



ODS Community Dental

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ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, hay disponibles servicios de ayuda con el idioma sin costo alguno para usted. Llame al 1-877-605-3229 (TTY: 711).

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## Your new dentures

Dentures replace your missing teeth and improve your smile. Your dentist will talk to you about the best denture treatment plan for you. There are several types of dentures and your experience can vary based on which type of dentures your dentist recommends.

## Types of dentures

- **Replacement dentures:** A new set of dentures that replace your existing dentures. Dentures can wear out over time and your gums can shrink. If this happens, your dentist will recommend replacement dentures.
- **Conventional dentures:** After your teeth are removed you will go without teeth until your dentist makes dentures for you. Conventional dentures are made for patients that have not had teeth for a long time. They are also made for patients who have had their teeth removed recently and their mouth has fully healed.
- **Immediate dentures:** Made in advance and placed in your mouth immediately after your teeth are extracted. Your dentist will tell you how to take care of your mouth after your extractions. It is important to follow their instructions.

As your mouth heals from the extractions, your gums that support the denture will shrink. Changes in your mouth can continue for several months. During this time, it is important to keep your dental appointments.

## Denture facts

Your lower denture is held in place by the muscles of the lips, tongue and cheeks so it will not feel as secure as your upper denture.

- It usually takes 4 to 5 times longer to master a complete lower denture compared to an upper denture.
- Getting used to a denture takes time and patience. Remember, your gum tissue changes, not your denture. Some patients may need to make several dental visits for adjustments.
- A gain or loss in body weight can change the fit of your denture.

Your dentist can help answer any questions you may have about your denture. If you are experiencing discomfort, your dentist can evaluate your denture and determine if it may need to be adjusted or relined.

## Getting used to your denture

It is important to know that your gums and jawbones were not designed to support plastic teeth so a new denture will be uncomfortable. It may feel loose while the muscles of your cheeks and tongue learn to hold it in place. You may feel minor irritation or soreness and saliva may increase. You may bite your cheeks or tongue as you learn to use your new denture.

It takes practice and patience to eat with dentures. Start with soft foods cut into small pieces. Chew slowly and use both sides of your mouth at the same time to keep the denture from moving out of place. Don't bite with your front teeth. That can cause your denture to tip and come loose. As you adjust to the denture, add other types of foods until you're back to your normal diet.

### *Important note:*

### **Yearly dental visits are very important**

After you adjust to wearing a denture, see your dentist for a complete checkup once a year. At your yearly dental visit, the dentist will do an oral cancer screening, examine your tissues and check your denture.

Speaking with a new denture takes time and practice. Read aloud and repeat difficult words in front of the mirror. Speak slowly to help reduce muffled, blurred or thickened speech. You may lisp or whistle your "s" when you first try to talk. Your denture may sometimes slip out of place when you laugh, cough or smile. Put it back in place by gently biting down and swallowing.

Although your denture is custom made to fit your mouth, your dentist may suggest using a denture adhesive while you get used to wearing it. Keep in mind that a denture adhesive is only a temporary fix.

## What to do right after placement of your dentures

- Eat soft healthy foods such as mashed potatoes, soups, eggs or cottage cheese.
- Be careful with hot foods. The plastic part of the denture may not allow you to feel hot food in some areas of your mouth.
- Chew your food on both sides at the same time.
- Do not chew gum, it can stick to your dentures.

## Care of your dentures

Dentures, like natural teeth, must be cleaned to keep your mouth healthy and odor free. Your dentist will tell you how to care for your denture. Here are some tips for taking care of your denture.

- Brush the surfaces of your denture inside and out morning and night. Brush with the solution from denture cleanser soaking solutions, liquid soaps or special toothpaste designed for dentures.
- Remove your dentures at night before bed. Dentures should not be worn while sleeping.
- Store your dentures in water or denture cleanser soaking solution when you are not wearing them. This helps keep the shape and prevents drying out.
- Don't use hot water on your denture. It will warp.
- Don't use scouring powders on your denture. They can remove the denture materials or roughen the surface.
- Don't use abrasive cleaners or bleach to remove stains. They can change the color of gum-colored acrylic.
- Don't adjust or repair a denture yourself. You can damage the denture and hurt your mouth.

## Denture relines

A loose denture makes it harder to chew and may cause irritation, sores or infection in your mouth. If your denture is loose, have your dentist check it. You may need a temporary reline or a laboratory reline.

A temporary reline is done in the office while you wait. It is usually done during the healing phase. The dentist adds a soft material to the underside of the denture. This material helps keep the denture close and comfortable. It is removed when a laboratory reline is needed.

A laboratory reline is done in a dental laboratory. You need to leave your dentures with the dentist for up to eight hours. The dentist removes any temporary relines and makes an impression of the space between your gums and the denture. A permanent reline is then made with the same type of material used to make the pink portion of your denture. A reline generally does not change how the denture or your face looks. A reline does not make a lower denture fit tighter, but it fits the tissue closer and better.