

DENTURES

What To Expect & How To Care For Your New Dentures

You are an individual

Although you now have new or relined dentures, the process of making your dentures is not yet complete. Adjusting to new dentures takes patience and time. While you may hear some people say that they never had to have any adjustments when they got new dentures -- that is not the norm. Every person adjusts to new dentures and relines differently and it will take both you and your dentist a number of visits to make the dentures function adequately. Whether this is your first pair of dentures or your sixth, your mouth will take time to adapt to the new pressures and feelings that come with new dentures.

Sore Areas with New Dentures

An appointment will be made for you 24 to 48 hours after insertion of your new dentures. Sore areas will develop within this time period and it is important to find and adjust the cause of the sores. Do not attempt to adjust the dentures yourself, as they can easily be made worthless by a do it-yourself adjustment. As patients use the dentures, they will settle on the soft tissues. This will necessitate additional adjustment appointments, as the occurrence of new sores is likely. Several adjustments may be required (3 or more adjustments is typical.) If you find it necessary to remove your dentures due to excess soreness, re-insert the dentures 12 hours preceding your appointment for the adjustment. This will make it possible to see the pressure area on the tissues and pinpoint accurately where to adjust the dentures.

A Special Note on Immediate Dentures

Immediate dentures are full dentures inserted immediately after having your last remaining teeth removed. Due to significant changes in the bones of your mouth, the dentures may not become truly stable for almost one year. Liners may need to be added to the dentures as

Continued Next Page

healing progresses. After the bone changes settle, you will need to pay for either a final relin or often even a new set of dentures if the changes have been significant. You must go to your dentist every time you notice changes, the dentures are becoming loose or you develop sore spots.

Chewing with New Dentures

Learning to chew with new dentures will probably take 6-8 weeks. Practice is required to learn to eat with your dentures. At first, limit your diet to soft foods that are easy to chew. Gradually learn to eat foods that are more difficult. Take small bites and chew slowly, trying to overcome the difficulties as they appear. If possible, learn to chew on both sides of your dentures at the same time. The lower dentures rarely have a good retention as the upper. Since the muscles of the cheeks, lip, and tongue will tend to displace your dentures, do not develop the habit of displacing them with these muscles. Rather, train these muscles to assist in keeping your dentures in place. When biting with dentures, place the food between the teeth toward the corner of the mouth rather than between the front teeth. This will help reduce the movement of the dentures on the ridges. If you have trouble keeping your lower denture in place during eating, it may be the result of poor tongue habits. The tongue should touch the inner surface of the lower denture to help stabilize it when eating.

Speaking with New Dentures

Learning to talk with your new dentures in place requires practice and perseverance. Reading aloud is very helpful method of learning to pronounce words distinctly. Practice those words and sounds that seem to give you the most difficulty. It takes time for the tongue to learn the different positions necessary to make good speech sounds with new dentures.

Increased Saliva with New Dentures

Do not be alarmed at the greater amounts of saliva in your mouth during the first few weeks of wearing your dentures. This condition will correct itself as you become accustomed to wearing them.

Continued Next Page

Oral Hygiene with Dentures

Cleaning your dentures is done DAILY with a brush, soap and water. You should not use toothpaste since it is abrasive. You can use any type of soap. Clean your dentures over a sink full of water or a towel in case they drop. It is best if you can keep your dentures out for 8 of every 24 hours to allow your tissues to rest. Powdered cleansers, like Stain Away Plus and Kleenite, work well to soak your dentures in at night, removing stains and odors. An ultrasonic jewelry cleaner can be used with the powdered denture cleansers for a professional quality cleaning. Brushing your remaining teeth or gums is also critical to good oral care. It is also recommended to rinse your mouth and dentures after meals.

Longevity of Dentures

The assumption that dentures will last a lifetime is incorrect. Take into consideration that both the denture and tissues will change over a period of time. It is suggested that your mouth be examined and a dentist on a yearly basis evaluate fit of your dentures. Shrinkage or resorption of your ridges is a normal occurrence. This results in a loosening of your dentures and perhaps a change in facial expression due to the settling of the denture on the ridges. Sometimes you will notice these changes within a few weeks. In some people it may not occur for many months or even a year or more. Changes in your ridges are beyond the control of the dentist and if it becomes necessary to re-fit or remove your dentures to correct this change, an additional fee will be charged. Never try to repair, relin or adjust the dentures yourself. This could be destructive to the tissue and underlying bone on which the denture rests.

Limitations of Dentures

Do not expect your dentures to function as your natural teeth once did. Dentures only function about 25 percent as efficiently as natural teeth. Learn to know the limitations of your dentures and adjust your living habits accordingly. And remember, a positive attitude helps. Keep smiling!