

This is a summary of knowledge for care of your oral prosthetics devices, including dentures, partial dentures, occlusal orthotics, bite splints, bleaching stents, mouth guards and sleep appliances.

Denture & Partial Denture Care



It is important to clean your mouth and denture daily so your mouth will stay healthy. Soaking dentures in water or a denture cleaner is not enough. They must be brushed with a soft toothbrush or with a toothbrush made especially for dentures. Having dentures does not mean that you can ignore your oral health and hygiene. It is still important to seek dental services regularly for evaluating the soft tissues and remaining bone to examine the denture for proper fit, comfort, and function. The following information is provided to educate you regarding the care of your mouth and dentures so that you will gain the maximum benefit from them.

Daily Denture Cleaning



Daily cleaning of your denture is necessary to prevent build-up of plaque, food, calculus (tartar), and stain. Poor hygiene can cause:

- problems with appearance or esthetics
- mouth odor
- irritation to the tissues under the denture
- infections in the mouth
- hard deposits of calculus (tartar) can build up on your dentures just like on teeth
- candidiasis (yeast infection)

How Should I Care for My Mouth and Gums?

Even with complete dentures, it is important to care for your mouth and brush your gums, tongue and palate with a soft-bristled brush every morning before you put in your dentures, as well as after meals and before bedtime. Some feel that if you use a tongue scraper (a loop-like device) the tongue can be cleaned better than with a brush. However you do it, this cleaning removes plaque and stimulates circulation in the mouth. If you have teeth, pay special attention to cleaning teeth that fit under the partial denture's metal clasps. Plaque that becomes trapped under the clasps will increase the risk of tooth decay. If you wear a partial denture, be sure to remove it before you brush your natural teeth. Clean, rest, and massage the gums regularly by removing the prosthesis from your mouth. Rinsing your mouth daily with luke-warm salt water will help clean your gums. Eat a balanced diet so that proper nutrition will help maintain a healthy mouth.

How do I keep my dentures clean?

- The most effective way to keep your dentures clean is by daily brushing several times, in combination with soaking the dentures in a chemical solution once daily, usually at night.
- First, rinse the denture under water after meals to remove loose food debris.
- Brush regularly several times a day - after each meal, between meals, or at least before bedtime. This removes the plaque and some stains.
- Make sure you reach all areas of the denture.
- Do not sleep in your dentures unless your dentist/Prosthodontist instructs you to do so.
- When cleaning dentures hold between your thumb and forefinger over a sink filled with water (or a bowl of water) and place a towel in the sink to act as a cushion in case the denture should drop. This way if the denture slips out of your hand, it will land in the water/towel and not break.
- Brush with water and soap, or denture paste made specifically for prostheses. Scouring powders or other abrasive cleaners should not be used because they scratch the denture. Scratches make it easier for dentures to collect debris, plaque and stain. Many toothpastes are also very abrasive and can scratch a denture.
- You can use a denture brush or a regular soft toothbrush to clean the denture, but use a separate brush for cleaning any natural teeth you have. Never use a hard or metal bristled brush to clean the denture. This can scratch the denture.
- After brushing, the denture can be soaked in a cleaner (such as Efferdent, Polident) that has a chemical action that helps remove or loosen light stains and deposits. Rinse the denture with water afterwards. These chemical immersions can be done daily or several times a week.



- During a dental appointment check-up we can use an ultrasonic and special chemical cleaning to remove heavy stain and calculus (tartar).

•If your denture has clasps, you need to take particular care when cleaning to avoid damage.

What should I do if I have a soft lining in my denture?

Some people have a need for a softer lining made for their dentures. If you have one of these special linings, it is important to check with your dentist/Prosthodontist before using any cleaning products or fixatives as some products can damage the lining.

What should I do if I have a temporary soft lining in my denture?

Tissue conditioning materials are indicated for very short time periods or 1 to 2 weeks. Follow the directions you are given when you receive these liners. Usually cold water rinses ONLY are indicated for these liners. The rest of the hard denture can be cleaned with a brush and soap as usual. If this liner has been in for more than 2 weeks please call and make an appointment to have this removed and replaced with a clean new conditioner.

Can I Microwave my dentures?

Use caution here. There are reports that microwaving complete dentures is effective for cleaning and disinfecting. Great care must be given for the using this technique for cleaning a denture.

- Do not microwave any denture that contains metal.
- Only very short times and intensity settings can be used (3 minutes at 500W)
- Link here for directions in microwaving a denture.<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=3742>

Don't forget, not only do your dentures need maintenance, but care also needs to be given to the tissues under your denture.

Take your denture out of your mouth for at least 6 to 8 hours every day. Wearing them all the time without allowing your gums a chance "to breathe" can result in infections of the soft tissues under the denture. When out of your mouth, keep the denture in water, denture solution or diluted mouthwash.

Be sure to brush and massage your gums and tongue daily with a soft toothbrush, washcloth and/or tongue scraper. Always brush any remaining natural teeth you may have. This removes the plaque and debris on the gums. This also massages and stimulates circulation of tissues. Massage your gums by placing the thumb and index finger over the ridge and use a "press-and-release" stroke with either a brush or washcloth.

If you have an overdenture or partial denture it is very important to keep any remaining natural teeth free of plaque. To clean your natural teeth, go to the following links:

Brushing Instructions -

<http://www.umanitoba.ca/outreach/wisdomtooth/brushing.htm>

Flossing Instructions -

<http://www.umanitoba.ca/outreach/wisdomtooth/flossing.htm>

Some other helpful hints:

When brushing the appliance *do not hold it firmly by the sides or with too much pressure* as this can cause a fracture or even break the denture.

Do not clean dentures with boiling water. Do not soak or rinse the denture in hot water, as this can distort the shape and fit of the denture.

Clean all hard denture surfaces, both inside and outside, with a denture brush and denture cleaner

that you can buy at a drug store or grocery. Do not use *any* abrasive cleaning agent, even toothpaste is very abrasive, and never use a powder like Ajax™ or Comet™.

Do not use alcohol, whiteners, full strength bleach, full strength mouthwashes (they usually contain alcohol) or other harsh chemical cleaners.

Do not put your dentures in a dishwasher.

Never scrape the denture with sharp instruments in an attempt to remove hard deposits. This can cause scratches which only further attract more hard deposits. Instead, take it to a dental professional for them to remove the deposits.

If a denture smells, it can be occasionally disinfected, after a thorough brushing, by being soaked in a solution of 1 teaspoon of bleach (such as Clorox™) in 1 cup of water. Soak the denture for 30 minutes, then rinse well before putting it back in your mouth. Also, avoid using bleach regularly, as this may whiten the pink portion of the denture and cause degradation of the entire denture. Never soak in a bleach overnight.

Can I Make Adjustments or Repairs to My Dentures?

One or more follow-up appointments are generally needed soon after you receive your denture so that your Prosthodontist can make any necessary adjustments. Never attempt to adjust or repair your dentures yourself. Never bend any part of the clasp or metal attachments yourself; doing so can weaken or break the metal. "Do-it-yourself" repair kits can permanently damage your dentures and over-the-counter glues may contain harmful chemicals, and impair professional repair.

Dentures that don't fit properly can cause irritation and sores in your mouth and on your gums. Be sure to contact our office if your denture breaks, cracks, chips or if one of the teeth becomes loose. Many times we can make the necessary adjustment or repair on the same day. For some complicated repairs, your denture may have to be sent to a special dental laboratory for repair.

Do not try to adjust a denture with sandpaper, files or or “Dremel” style tools. This will usually ruin the denture.

Do not use denture liners or denture adhesives unless specifically recommended to do so by your dentist/Prosthodontist. Denture adhesives are hard to remove from the tissues and act as a breeding ground for bacteria and yeast (candida). They usually cause more harm by altering a proper fit.

When your dentures are not in your mouth, keep them in water or denture solution. They need to be kept in a wet environment in order to maintain the proper fit.

With age, the jaw bones and soft tissue slowly change. With time the pressure on the underlying gums and bone causes them to resorb, leaving space where there was once tissue, as the dentures stay the same. Therefore, dentures that once fit no longer do. In addition the teeth wear down, altering the fit of the “bite”. You may need to have your dentures re-fit by relining or you may need to have a new denture made.

Come to see me for the following:

- Fitting appointments after you get a denture if you encounter any sore spots or problems
- When you have mouth sores that last for more than one week
- When your dentures become loose in your mouth
- One time a year to check the health of your mouth, the fit of your denture and to have your prostheses professionally checked and cleaned.
- Problems chewing food with your dentures
- Chronic cheek or tongue biting
- Difficulty in speech
- Red and inflamed tissues
- Discomfort with wearing the denture(s)
- Cracked corners of your mouth
- Dentures that are broken
- Chipped or broken teeth.

Will My Dentures Need to Be Replaced?

Over time, dentures will need to be relined, re-based or remade due to normal wear, natural age-related changes to your face, jaw bones and gums, tooth wear, or if the dentures become loose. To reline or rebase a denture, the Prosthodontist refits the denture base or makes a new denture base and reuses the existing teeth. Generally, complete dentures should be used for 5 to 7 years before a replacement is necessary.

How Often Should I See the Dentist?

A healthy mouth has clean, stable tissues and teeth. You should have an even bite, secure dentures and be free of pain. Your mouth should be comfortable when you chew and your breath should be fresh. See your dentist if you have:

- Painful or loose teeth
- Ulcers which last more than two weeks
- Gum abscess
- Bleeding gums
- Swelling
- Soreness or cracks in the corner of your mouth.
- Any change you feel is abnormal

It is important to visit your dentist regularly even if you don't have any of your natural teeth. Dentists do not only check teeth, but also the soft parts of the mouth, including the tongue and cheeks. These examinations are just as important, so the dentist can spot any infections, abnormal mouth conditions or even a mouth cancer, hopefully at the earliest stages. Your dentist or Prosthodontist will advise you about how often you need to visit, but every 6 months should be the norm. Regular dental visits are important so that your denture and mouth can be examined for proper denture fit, to look for signs of oral diseases including cancer, and to have your teeth and dentures professionally cleaned.

A key to good oral health is knowledge.

Other Denture Information

You can expect some adjustment for the first month after getting a fixed partial, removable partial, or full denture.

The only thing holding a lower denture in is gravity, your tongue and your lips. In addition, lower dentures, over time, may not fit as well. Your dentist/Prosthodontist can reline the denture for a better fit. Go to www.newteethbytom.com and look for denture liner information for additional information about different liners.

A reline added to your denture can be a soft or hard liner and this is either a temporary or definitive liner, however nothing is "permanent". If a soft liner is made and processed by a laboratory and it will stay soft as long as the material lasts. However, all long term soft liners will last less time than hard liners, typically 2 to 3 years. Long term soft liners have several disadvantages:

- They are hard to adjust without leaving them somewhat rough, since by their nature they are soft and hard to polish
- They are difficult, if not impossible to repair if they are damaged
- They can come loose from the hard denture base, leaving a gap for bacteria and yeast
- Some over-the-counter cleaners can damage the liner (even if they say they are safe)
- They can discolor easily
- They can absorb odors more easily than a hard liner
- They need to be replaced more often than a hard liner

The upper denture is the one that usually causes the least discomfort. The advantage for the upper denture is "suction" with the roof of the mouth.

Poor oral hygiene can be the reason for denture discomfort.

As we age, tissues become more sensitive to pressure and can cause sore spots. Sometimes the nerve bundles get exposed and those areas in the denture need adjustment.

To ease discomfort, the mouth can be rinsed with a solution of either baking soda and water, or salt and water; a teaspoon of either in a cup of warm water is the recommended dilution. Rinse for 5 minutes several times a day. If a sore mouth remains untreated, it can cause other problems. Contact a dentist/Prosthodontist if the soreness continues.

If discomfort lasts longer than 3-4 days, contact your dentist/Prosthodontist.

Please, do not make your own adjustments.

I have more information about dentures, overdentures, relines, etc. on my webpage >> go to www.newteethbytom.com

How To Clean Your Denture www.denturehelp.com

Cleaning your dentures every day is one of the most important things you can do to help your smile keep its attractive appearance. If you don't, plaque and tartar can form on dentures, making them less bright. Plus, failure to clean your dentures regularly can result in staining and denture odor, as well.

Here are a few simple tips:



1. Dentures can break, so always fill the sink with some water, then clean your dentures over the sink, just in case they slip out of your hands by accident.



2. Rinse your dentures thoroughly to remove loose food particles. Use cool or warm water, but never use hot water – it can warp your dentures.



3. Apply a soft hand soap or denture cleaning paste to a moistened denture brush or a soft-bristled toothbrush. Do not use ordinary toothpaste, bleach, vinegar or soap unless

directed to do so by your dental professional.



4. Brush all surfaces thoroughly. Avoid using brushes with stiff bristles, as they can damage the denture material.



5. Rinse dentures well under the faucet to remove all traces of cleaning paste.



6. While you sleep at night, soak your dentures in a cleanser or water, as recommended. Denture cleansers help remove stains, tartar and odors. A fresh denture is more comfortable for you and others.

7. Always brush your gums, tongue and palate with a special denture brush or soft-bristled regular toothbrush to remove plaque and stimulate circulation. Brush your dentures to clean them well, then reinsert them.

8. To give your mouth an extra, fresh clean feeling, rinse with a mouthwash several times a day after rinsing and cleaning your dentures.