Your New Dentures

# Denture Care Instructions:

1. Unless instructed otherwise, take your dentures out EVERY NIGHT and place them in water or a commercial denture solution (like polydent). It is important for your gums to get 8 hours of rest per day – this allows your gums to “breathe” and heal/repair from the day. If dentures are left in all the time, they can build up bacteria and fungus and cause infections and sore spots to develop. Check your gums in a mirror daily - if you notice any white or red spots, excess tissue growth, any generalized redness to your gums where the denture sits, or tissue sloughing, call your dentist as soon as possible.
2. Anytime you take the denture out of your mouth, place it in water or a denture solution. If a denture dries out (over 1 hour dry time) – it may warp the acrylic and cause the denture not to fit anymore. Eventually, the dried out acrylic will become more brittle and crack as well.
3. Brush out any denture adhesive completely from your gums and the denture itself NIGHTLY with your denture brush or a tooth brush. Use a warm wet washcloth to wipe your gums off after each day otherwise.
4. Whenever placing or removing your denture from your mouth, do it over a towel or soft object (if it falls into a porcelain sink or on a hard floor, it will likely break or crack)
5. DO NOT use toothpaste, bleach, or any other product on your dentures that is not a recommended product for dentures specifically. While these may keep them clean in the short-term, eventually, it will destroy the acrylic and cause cracking/abrasions that will pick up stain and may cause problems long term. Only brush your dentures with a wetted toothbrush.
6. Denture adjustments should be scheduled with your dentist whenever you feel a sore spot developing or your bite feels off – if you had recent extractions – your gums and bone will be changing and healing for the next 3 months. Even if you haven’t had extractions in a while, your gums will take time to “toughen up” to the denture and you may need adjustments that the dentist could not make until you see where it is hitting after chewing food. Ideally, do not stop wearing the denture when you get a sore spot – if the sore spot is too painful – rinse with warm salt water and take Over the Counter pain medications as needed or use “ora-gel” on the sore spot – when you come into dental office, the dentist will be able to see exactly where the sore spot is if you continue to wear the denture, and make the most conservative adjustment to the area of the denture causing the sore spot.
7. After about 6 months, your denture may need to be relined if the fit is no longer ideal. This is an additional expense, and can be discussed with your dentist at that time. Relines can be done as often as you like, but are generally done once every year or two. Know that this will require additional adjustments afterwards.
8. Dentures should be completely replaced every 6-7 years due to the ever-changing status of your gums and bone (this is because of the bone loss process your body naturally undergoes due to not having teeth there anymore). If you keep your original denture for too long, it may speed up the bone loss process due to hitting the gums with uneven pressure.

# Speaking with Dentures:

1. Right now, your denture will feel large in your mouth – your tongue and cheek muscles will shrink over the next 2 weeks and it won’t feel so large after that and speaking will be easier
2. “S” sounds are the most difficult to adjust to in the beginning – try reading a book out loud in a mirror so you can see how your lips and tongue are moving as you speak
3. Speak slowly and articulate well – your muscles will need practice to speak faster
4. If you have a dry mouth, your dentures will not have any suction power (which is the main way they stay in your mouth). If you feel like they are not staying in, try wetting the denture with water, and pressing the denture down (like a suction cup works better when it is wet) for about 10 seconds.
5. if you are not getting the staying-power you desire throughout the day, try a saliva substitute like Biotene rinse or gel, or talk you’re your doctor about Salagen (an oral drug used to stimulate saliva flow), or try keeping a water bottle with you throughout the day to sip. It is likely due to your mouth drying out. Otherwise, schedule a denture adjustment wit h your dentist.
6. if you still are not getting the staying-power you desire, try one of the adhesives that can be purchased through either a pharmacy or grocery store such as Fixodent or Polygrip (the powders tend to taste better but are slightly less effective, and the gels tend to be stronger, but have a less pleasant taste). If you use an adhesive, it is important that you brush it out of the denture every night so that it doesn’t build up. Also scrub it off your gums with either a washcloth or a toothbrush. If the adhesive starts to build-up you could get a zinc toxicity or a fungal or bacterial infection.

# Eating with Dentures:

1. Start with soft foods, and work your way up to harder/chewy foods
2. Make sure you are eating a balanced diet – if you aren’t getting the vitamins you need, try shakes like “ensure” to balance out your diet in the beginning while you are getting used to eating with your new dentures
3. Cut your food into smaller, bite-size pieces
4. Chew your food on both sides of your mouth at the same time to prevent the denture from rocking when you chew on one side only (like mashing food, rather than chewing)
5. If you have denture teeth in the front, use your back teeth to bite or incise into foods like carrots, etc so the denture does not rock forward and possibly break the front teeth
6. Because the denture covers up taste buds (taste buds aren’t only on your tongue, they are on the roof and floor of your mouth as well), you may notice that food tastes more bland – you may need to add more sugar and salt to your food in the beginning. After a couple weeks, you taste buds will adjust.
7. Because you have an appliance in your mouth, your body will naturally assume that it is food, and you may notice that you are salivating excessively. This will decrease in about 1-2 weeks after your body adjust to the new appliance and realizes that it is not food.

## If you are not happy with your denture fit and these suggestions have not helped you, please know that there are other options to help hold your denture in better – such as implants – talk to your dentist about incorporating implants to help your denture “lock in” or possibly replacing your denture with an implant bridge to allow you to feel the roof of your mouth.

# If you have any further questions, call our office at (443)-244-9222. When the office is closed, call the main number above and the voicemail message will direct you to the emergency line to get in touch with the doctor directly.