

Home Care Instructions for Dentures

Dentures are an artificial replacement of your natural teeth, and just as with any other prosthesis, it will not behave and function exactly as what it has replaced. The dentures may be uncomfortable and awkward at first, and will likely require several adjustments during the initial “breaking in” stages.

Eating

Dentures are very different from your natural teeth; unlike your teeth, dentures are not anchored in bone, but instead rest on top of mobile tissue. This means that the denture, especially the lower denture, can and will move in your mouth when you eat and when you speak. Your new “bite” may not feel comfortable for a period of days. We will adjust the contacting surfaces of your teeth after 24 hours, and again in about one week after the dentures have “settled” into place. Eating with your dentures will take some getting used to. Doing the following should help:

- Start with soft, easy to chew foods; such as fish, cheese, eggs, chopped meat, cooked vegetables or ice cream.
- Take small bites
- Chew on both sides of your mouth at the same time; this helps to stabilize the denture.
- Biting into food is difficult with dentures and will tend to dislodge the upper denture. Therefore, food like apples and corn should be sliced before eating.
- Avoid very hot foods and drinks to prevent burns as dentures decrease temperature sensation.

Speaking

It is common for patients to have some difficulty speaking with a new pair of dentures. A common pronunciation problem is with words containing “s” or “f” sounds. It is helpful to practice by reading aloud or speaking in front of a mirror. It may also be helpful to swallow before speaking to “set” the dentures in place.

Sore Spots

Your mouth will most likely develop a few sore spots within the first 24 hours of wearing your dentures. This is to be expected as such sore spots can be easily relieved by your Dentist. An initial 24 hours readjustment appointment should be made if necessary, and another appointment about a week later will usually eliminate any other sore spots.

Saliva

Saliva is very important to wearing dentures: it helps the denture adhere to the underlying tissue, cushions the gums from chewing pressures, and helps swallow food. When you first begin wearing dentures there may be excess saliva in your mouth (this is a natural reaction and will balance out in about a week).

Oral and Denture Hygiene

Dentures need to be cleaned every morning and every evening. It is best to clean them over a sink full of water or a towel as this can prevent the dentures from breaking if it slips out of your hands. Remove debris by brushing with a denture brush with soft bristles. Do not use toothpaste, instead use a denture paste or dishwashing detergent.

Dentures also need to be rinsed after each meal. No matter how well a denture may fit, some food will get underneath the denture as you eat. If it is left there, it can irritate the tissue. So after each meal, remove the denture, rinse out your mouth, and rinse the denture under running water. Do not rinse the denture in very hot or boiling water as this may cause distortion of the denture; instead use warm to cool water.

Dentures should always be in one of two places: your mouth or a denture bath. The denture bath should be filled with water or you can use denture-soaking solution (i.e. Polident or Efferdent). Also, on occasion, you may use a vinegar solution (1 teaspoon of vinegar in a cup of water) to help dissolve tartar.

In addition to cleaning your dentures, it is important to continue to care for your gums and tongue. It is not necessary to use toothpaste, but simply brush the gums and tongue with a soft toothbrush each night. Every night it is important to remove the dentures in order to allow the gum tissues to rest. This can be done overnight or for 3-4 hour periods during the day.

Return Visit

To help maintain your dentures and your oral health, annual dental visits are important. These visits will allow us to examine your oral tissues and the fit of your denture, which can change with time as the ridges supporting the dentures continue to change shape.

It may be necessary to visit the dentist sooner if any of the following occurs: sore spots, chips, and breaks. Dentures can break, please DO NOT try to repair the dentures yourself. Place the broken pieces in a Ziploc bag and bring them to your appointment.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call your main office. After office hours, you can call us at (504) 265-1304 or email us at info@geauxsmiles.com.