



## **Denture care and advice**

### **How Long Will it Take to Get Used to Them?**

Most people experience some initial problems with their new dentures especially when eating and talking, this is normal and expected. Talking will gradually improve after a few days. Eat a soft diet initially for a few days, then progress to a normal diet. Sticky foods will give the greatest problems. Avoid hard foods like nuts as this can break the denture. Dentures can take up to 4 weeks to feel completely normal but may take longer if the dentures are not worn all the time or old dentures are re-used.

### **How Do I Look After Them?**

Clean them thoroughly twice a day by taking them out and cleaning with a special denture brush or large toothbrush. Clean with a non-abrasive toothpaste. Leave to soak in water or a denture cleaner overnight. Never use any type of bleach.

### **My Dentures feel uneven and they Rock on Biting?**

This problem can create sore areas underneath the denture where pressure congregates. Contact your dentist so that an adjustment can be made. If you only have one denture and no opposing back teeth, tipping/rocking when biting together can only be cured by a denture stabilising the back teeth.

### **My New Dentures are Sore!**

It is quite common that sore areas develop on the edges of the new dentures. Please continue to wear them but arrange an appointment to see your dentist as soon as possible. This allows the dentist to see the cause of the problem and correct it straight away. It is tempting to take the dentures out or revert to old dentures, however this will cause the sore patch to heal and then the dentist may not be able to see where to adjust. Sometimes more than one adjustment is needed, a dentist may be reluctant to take too much off the denture in one go as the retention may be affected.

### **Do I Take them Out at Night?**

Dentures must be taken out each night and left to soak. This allows the teeth and gums to breathe and stops you grinding the denture whilst asleep. This reduces wear on the denture and also reduces the possibility of gum disease or tooth decay if you have teeth remaining.

### **I've Just Had Teeth Out, What Can I Expect?**

Dentures that are immediately fitted to replace the gaps following an extraction will need final fitting and smoothing a few days later after the anaesthetic has worn off. The dentures can be worn continually for the first week after cleaning each night. Whilst cleaning the dentures you should rinse the extraction site with salt water or mouthwash. The dentures are cleaned with a firm brush and any debris removed. After the first week take the dentures out each night. As the swelling and the extraction site heals the dentures will become more comfortable and gradually fit better. After a few months, the bone shrinks and the shape of the gums change this may cause the dentures to gradually lose their good fit and become loose. After 6 to 12 months once completely healed the dentures may need a new base, called relining, to fit better. Alternatively new dentures can be constructed.

### **How Long Do Dentures Last?**

Longevity of dentures depends on the denture and care given, we normally say 5 to 10 years is usual. Over time, as the denture ages and gums shrink this may change alignment giving your profile an aged look or the teeth may look worn and the appearance affected.

### **I Find it Difficult to Clean My Dentures ?**

Clean the dentures over a half filled basin of water so if they are dropped they do not break. Clean with warm water not hot as this can distort the denture and brush with a soft toothbrush and nonabrasive toothpaste. Special grips can be placed over denture brushes so that they can be held more easily.

### **Do I Need a Spare Set?**

It is good to have a spare set most people will be embarrassed if they had to eat or talk without the reassurance of dentures. You may be without dentures if they were damaged, lost or being repaired for any reason. Usually an old set can be the spare, this is not needed but many people prefer to have them for reassurance