

**DENTURE POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS**

**Complete Dentures**

**Adapting to Dentures**

The early weeks of denture wearing can be quite a challenge. You may try various finger positions and ways to dislodge your denture (i.e. pulling on only the left or right side of the denture to remove it). Also try placing your thumb against the front teeth and press upward and outward toward your nose. Soon you will be able to place and remove your denture without even thinking about it. To remove a lower denture, slowly pull on the denture while applying a rocking motion.

Eating will take practice. Start with soft foods cut into small pieces. Chew slowly using both sides of your mouth at the same time to prevent dentures from tipping. As you become accustomed to chewing, add other foods until you return to your normal diet. Continue to chew food using both sides of the mouth at the same time.

Pronouncing certain words may require practice. Reading out load and repeating troublesome words will help. Reading the newspaper out load is the best practice or try singing in the car. If your dentures “click” while you are talking, speak more slowly. You may find that your dentures occasionally slip when you laugh, cough, or smile. Reposition the dentures by gently biting down and swallowing. If a speaking problem persists, an adjustment may be needed.

**Caring for your Dentures**

Dentures are very delicate and may break if dropped even a few inches. Stand over a folded towel or a basin of water when handling dentures. When you are not wearing them, store your dentures away from children and pets. Dogs love to chew on dentures.

Like natural teeth, dentures must be brushed daily to remove food deposits and plaque. Brushing helps your mouth stay healthy. It is best to use a brush designed for cleaning dentures. A toothbrush with soft bristles can also be used. Avoid using hard bristle brushes that can damage dentures. Gently brush all surfaces of the denture and be careful not to damage the plastic or bend attachments. In between brushings, rinse your denture after every meal.

When cleaning, we recommend a denture cleanser. These can be found at any grocery store or pharmacy. Household cleansers may be too abrasive for your dentures and should not be used. Also, avoid using bleach as this may whiten the pink portion of the denture.

Dentures need to be kept moist when not being worn, so they do not dry out or lose their shape. Never place dentures in hot water, as this can cause them to warp.

Due to the healing process and the change of bone contours, several follow-up adjustment appointments will be needed. Remember this is an interim denture and you cannot expect a perfect fit or look. Relines may be necessary and the cost for this is NOT included in the initial denture fee. Never attempt to adjust or repair the denture yourself. Any adjustments needed are at no charge to you.

**Post-Operative Instructions After Placement of an Immediate Denture**

1. For the first 24 hours your immediate denture is not to be removed from your mouth. If the denture is removed, swelling may occur that will make it difficult or impossible to replace the denture. Oozing of blood around the denture is normal and is not cause for concern.  
   Your immediate denture not only replaces your missing teeth, but it is acting to protect the surgical site, control swelling, and control bleeding. The denture needs to be in place to be effective.
2. Do not rinse your mouth with anything for 24 hours; however, continue to brush your remaining teeth carefully. After 24 hours, we will see you for a follow-up. After your follow-up, in addition to your routine brushing, gently rinse your mouth with a lukewarm salt-water solution (made by dissolving 1/2 teaspoon of table salt in an 8 oz. glass of warm water.) Rinse 3 to 4 times a day for four or five days. Take care not to strain or empty your mouth with undue force.
3. After extractions do not spit, smoke or suck on a straw. Do not rinse your mouth vigorously. Do not drink any hot beverages or carbonated beverages. All of these things can dislodge blood clots that are necessary for healing.
4. Take all medications as prescribed. If a prescription for pain is written, you should not operate a motor vehicle while taking this medication. Some discomfort may be expected following oral surgery procedures.  
   Any over the counter pain relieving medication like Ibuprofen every 4-6 hours will usually relieve discomfort. You can take up to 800 mg of Ibuprofen every 6 hours (do not exceed 3200mg in a 24 hour period) or Tylenol.
5. Swelling is common after oral surgery for up to one week with the maximum amount of swelling usually present on the second day after surgery. The swelling will slowly resolve over 4-7 days. Apply an ice bag to the outside of the face for 20 minutes, and then leave off for 20 minutes. Repeat this procedure for 24 hours, and then discontinue using the ice. This will reduce discomfort, bleeding and swelling.
6. You may eat and drink. Soft foods are advisable for at least 24 hours. Avoid hard or crunchy foods. Drink as much liquid as possible, but do not go on a liquid diet. Do not consume liquids through a straw. You may resume normal physical activity as tolerated 2-3 days after your surgery.

**Partial Dentures**

* You may feel an initial annoyance or bulkiness when you first start wearing your partial. Even a well-fitting partial denture must be biologically and psychologically accepted before it feels like a part of your mouth.  A small percentage of patients will never be able to adapt to a partial denture, therefore no guarantee can be made that you will be able to use the prosthesis with comfort and assurance.
* It is normal to experience increased saliva production as a response to the presence of the partial denture in your mouth.  This will diminish in a short period of time.
* Initially speech can be difficult.  This is overcome with practice in a short period of time.
* It is common for sore areas to develop in the first few days or weeks.  These areas require adjustment before they can heal.  It is our intention to evaluate the tissue for irritations and sore spots caused by pressure areas or rubbing of the partial. That is why we schedule at least a 24-72 hour post-operative adjustment appointment.  It is important to continue to return for post-insertion appointments until you are free from these pressure areas.
* Leave the partial denture out of your mouth at least 8 hours every day to allow your tissues to rest.  While sleeping is usually the best time to leave the partial out, you may leave it out at any time during the day.  When the partial is out of your mouth it should be kept in water to avoid drying out.  You can buy and inexpensive denture container at most drug stores, which will allow storage in water.  Always store your partial denture in a safe place away from pets, children, etc.
* Cleaning your teeth and partial denture is very important.  This should be accomplished several times a day. This stimulates the tissues covered by the partial denture and rids your mouth of food and bacterial debris which can be disruptive to the health of your teeth and tissues. After removing the partial denture, brush and floss your remaining teeth after breakfast, lunch, dinner, and before bed. If you can’t brush and floss, swish with water and spit out excess. Massage the tissue covered by the partial with your soft bristle tooth brush. Clean your partial over a sink filled with water—this is to avoid dropping and fracturing the partial in the sink. Use a denture brush to scrub and then rinse under running water. If deposits accumulate, you can soak it in a commercial partial denture cleaner. Do not use bleach, as it will destroy the metal framework.Do not brush the partial denture teeth with toothpaste, as this will scratch the teeth.