

HEALTH

The truth about bone loss

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Let's talk about tooth loss and the effects it has on our bones. Each natural tooth is supported in the jaw bone; the lower jaw is called the mandible and the upper jaw is called the maxilla.

Each tooth has a root which extends into the bone and is supported by the periodontal ligament; this ligament acts like a spring and allows each tooth to have a little wiggle room, so that when we bite into something hard or sticky, we don't harm our teeth.

Tooth roots also stimulate the surrounding bone, keeping it healthy. If we lose one, some, or all of our teeth, the tooth roots are removed from the bone. This loss leaves a hole in the bone, called a socket.

After tooth loss, the sockets will heal and close; a process that can take upwards of a year after the extractions. What this means is that after the loss of teeth, the bones shrink since the tooth root is no longer there to stimulate the bone (as shown below).

Once tooth loss is upon us, it's now time to consider a denture. It could be a partial denture (which replaces one or some of our natural teeth), or it could be a full/complete denture (which replaces all teeth). Understanding how the bones heal, shrink and change greatly affects the success of a first time denture wearer, or even someone who has worn dentures for many years.

After we lose our natural teeth, the bones continue to shrink indefinitely; this is why it is important to have your dentures checked annually. Denture relines are very important for the longevity of the denture and should be done on average every three years.

Whether you are a new patient to Winnipeg Denture or a long-standing patient of Greg Pinette, your check-ups are always free.

Normal anatomy
(no bone loss)



Bone begins to recede
after loss of teeth



Bone loss continues
without intervention

