

What to Expect from Your New Dentures

Learning to wear a new denture takes time and patience. The first few weeks will be a period of adjustment. Your dentures will need to be adjusted and you will need to adjust to your new dentures.

The following suggestions will help you to answer some questions that you may have during your adjustment period. These suggestions cover many common questions that arise. I have told you about some of these things that specifically relate to your dentures. There may be other suggestions that I related to you that are not covered here. If you have additional questions, please write them down at the time you think of them, and I will discuss them with you at your adjustment visit.

1. Soreness

Soreness will probably develop in your mouth during your period of adjustment. This soreness is expected and in most instances I depend on the type and location of sore spots to guide me in the adjustment of your dentures. Wear your dentures overnight tonight only and return tomorrow so that I may adjust for you your sore spots before they become severe. If you remove your dentures, keep them in water and be sure to wear them again for at least four (4) hours immediately prior to your appointment. This is necessary to determine the cause and type of treatment needed. Never try to adjust your dentures. The cause for your soreness may require one of many types of adjustments. Only a doctor can decide what adjustments are needed.

2. Comfort

Do not expect your dentures to feel natural or comfortable at first. If this is your set of dentures, you should readily realize that you have some adapting to do. If you have previously worn dentures, you must realize that your new dentures are different, and you will need to alter some old habits and learn some new ones. A feeling of fullness is perfectly natural. Your dentures will be imposing on the former positions of your face muscles. The muscles in your lips, cheeks and tongue will adjust. Your muscles will at first tend to displace your dentures, but you will learn new muscle habits. These same muscles will actually assist in keeping your dentures in place. **DO NOT** form habits of loosening your dentures with your tongue or lips. **DO NOT** bite in unnatural positions. This habit will only loosen your dentures and draw the attention of others.

3. Criticism

It is very natural to want to show your new dentures to close friends. However, it is best that you do not invite criticism from your friends. If comments do arise, do not let them discourage you. I have attempted to duplicate your natural appearance and gain proper muscle support for your face and lips. If you have worn a previous denture, this may entail a considerable change. You and your friend will adjust to this change quickly. Try not to feel self-conscious. Try to forget that you are wearing dentures, and you will not draw attention to them.

4. Eating

Learning to chew well with dentures normally requires at least 6 to 8 weeks. You should begin by chewing relatively soft food that is cut into small pieces. **DO NOT** try to test your new dentures on difficult foods. Many people have made this mistake and have suffered quite severely. Such foods as steak, peanuts, fresh vegetables and fresh bread should be avoided until after your period of adjustment, and even then they can be quite damaging.

It has been shown that dentures, at best, are only about 25% as efficient for eating as natural teeth. You will eventually learn to use your dentures quite well, but always remember there is a limit.

5. Speech

At first you may have some trouble speaking properly with your new dentures. Some of this trouble is caused by the dentures and some of it by your psychological awareness of new dentures. Your tongue is fantastically adaptable muscle and research has shown that it will adapt to almost any change in a week's time. You can gain confidence by practicing your speech reading aloud in front of a mirror.

6. Cleaning

Never place your dentures in hot water or run hot water over them. Brush your dentures thoroughly at least twice a day with a specially designed denture brush. Do not use toothpaste or any other abrasive substance. I recommend that you use a common liquid dish detergent when brushing your denture. Also, you will want to soak your dentures periodically in one of the commercial soak solutions.

You may also soak your dentures for ½ hour once each week in a solution of 3 ounces water, 1 teaspoon Calgon (or vinegar) and 2

teaspoons bleach. The Calgon (or vinegar) will remove mineral deposits that have formed from the salts in your saliva. The bleach functions to remove stains and as a disinfectant.

While maintaining cleanliness is necessary for any prosthesis, it is very important that you should not soak a removable partial denture in bleach solutions or any other cleaners containing a hypochlorite compound. This can cause tarnish and pitting of the metal component.

7. Tissue Health

I ask quite strongly that you **DO NOT** wear your dentures at night. Dental research has shown that constant day and night pressure on the soft tissues and bone beneath your dentures contributes significantly to the amount and degree of changes and shrinkage of these tissues. When your dentures are left out, they should be kept in water. Never allow your dentures to dry out. The plastic portion can distort if allowed to dry.

8. Adhesive

Please do not use any adhesive or home-relining material inside your dentures. If for any reason you think adhesive is necessary, please discuss the problem with me.

9. Health

Your general health is an important factor in the fit of your dentures. Health affects the tissues of your mouth and the bone and tissue response to artificial dentures. Periodical medical checkups are recommended.

10. Age

Your age may be a factor in how well you adjust to your new dentures. Many older people adjust to their new dentures in a very short time, at times much better than young people do. However, age does many times play tricks on us. We become set in our ways, we rebel against change, we dislike adjusting to something new. Possibly your ability to tolerate new things is less than it was 30 to 40 year ago.

11. Change of Life

A very important age factor is the change of life emotions. Unfortunately, dentures are many times required at the same time in

life as this physiological change. This may be a very disturbing time and if you are possible affected in this manner, your adjustment to dentures may be affected. You may wish to consult your physician.

12. Adjustments

I expect a certain number of adjustments to be necessary in completing my service of making the best possible dentures for you. When this adjustment period is completed, there will be a necessary charge for further adjustments.

13. Checkups

I would like to emphasize the importance of periodic checkups.

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