

# Dentures FAQ -

## What is a denture?

A denture is an appliance which is worn to replace lost or missing teeth to enable you to enjoy a healthy diet and smile with confidence. A complete or full denture is one which replaces all of the natural teeth in either the upper or lower jaws. A partial denture fills in the spaces created by lost or missing teeth and is attached to your natural teeth with metal clasps or devices called precision attachments.

## What are dentures made of?

The base of a denture is called a plate and can be made of either acrylic (plastic) or metal. The teeth are normally made of acrylic and can be made to match your natural teeth. This is especially important in the case of partial dentures.

## Will dentures make me look different?

Dentures can be made to closely resemble your natural teeth so that little change in appearance will be noticeable. Modern dentures may even improve the look of your smile and help fill out the appearance of your face.

## Will I be able to eat with dentures?

Eating will take a little practice. Start with soft foods cut into small pieces. Chew slowly using both sides of your mouth at the same time to prevent the denture from moving. As you become more used to your denture, add other foods until you return to your normal healthy diet.

## How long should I wear my dentures?

During the first few days, you may be advised to wear them for most of the time, including while you are asleep. After an initial period of adjustment your dentist may advise that you remove them before going to bed. This allows your gums to rest and helps promote oral health.

## Must I do anything special to care for my mouth?

Even with full dentures, you still need to take good care of your mouth. Every morning and evening, brush your gums, tongue and palate (roof of your mouth) with a soft –bristled brush. This removes plaque and stimulates circulation in the mouth. It is vitally important that partial denture wearers brush their teeth thoroughly every day to prevent tooth decay and gum disease that can lead to further teeth being lost.

## How do I take care of my dentures?

Dentures are very delicate and may break if dropped. When cleaning dentures it is recommended that you do so over a folded towel or sink of water. When you are not wearing your dentures, they should be stored in a container containing enough water to cover them.

Like natural teeth, dentures must be brushed daily to remove food debris and plaque. Brushing helps prevent dentures becoming stained and helps your mouth stay healthy. There are special denture cleaning brushes available but a soft bristled toothbrush can also be used. Avoid using hard-bristled brushes which can cause damage.

The use of an effervescent denture cleaner will help remove stubborn stains and leave your denture feeling fresher.

### **Will my dentures need to be replaced?**

Over a period of time, dentures will need to be relined or re-made due to normal wear or a change in the shape of your mouth. Bone and gum ridges can recede or shrink causing jaws to align differently. Loose dentures can cause health problems, including sores and infections not to mention discomfort. A loose or ill-fitting denture can also make eating and speaking more difficult. It is important to replace worn or poorly fitting dentures before they cause problems.