

Dentures



What are Dentures?

Dentures are removable 'false teeth' that are used to replace missing teeth. Dentures are custom-made and uniquely designed to fit your mouth. They can replace any number of teeth. You can have an upper denture, lower denture or both.

Dentures can either be made entirely of plastic (acrylic) or a mixture of metal and plastic (cobalt-chrome and acrylic).

Partial Dentures

Partial dentures replace some of the teeth in an arch, meaning that they sit and work alongside natural teeth. Natural teeth can sometimes be used to provide retention and support for a denture.



(Partial acrylic denture replacing two upper front teeth)



(Partial metal-based denture replacing five upper front teeth)

Complete Dentures

Complete dentures replace all of the teeth in a jaw; that is, all of the upper teeth or all of the lower teeth.



Why do I need a denture?

Dentures are commonly used in the following situations:

- To replace multiple teeth in either jaw
- To temporarily replace teeth during dental treatment
- To immediately replace teeth when they are lost

What happens during treatment?

Multiple appointments are often needed for dentures to be made.

A minimum of 6 appointments is needed for the denture to be finished and fit, however, more appointments are often required.

Making dentures usually involves the following sequence:

1. Impressions are taken of your upper and lower jaws. Following this appointment a custom-made impression tray is made in the dental laboratory.
2. A second impression using the custom-made tray is taken of the jaw that is going to have a denture on it. This impression is more accurate and is used to make the denture/s. If you have natural teeth, some may require adaptation at this appointment.



(Denture impression in custom tray for the lower jaw)

3. Wax blocks are used to record your bite and plan the position of the denture teeth.

4. A trial denture is made out of wax for you to assess the appearance and fit.

5. The finished denture is fitted and instructions of how to clean and wear them are given.

6. Your denture is reviewed and adjusted if there are any problems with it.



(Example of a wax block to record the bite)

What are the advantages of dentures?

- **Tooth replacement:** Dentures can replace multiple missing teeth
- **Appearance:** Dentures can provide excellent aesthetics and restore the appearance of missing teeth.
- **Minimal tooth preparation:** Denture require no/minimal tooth drilling
- **Tooth health:** Dentures can be provided when the remaining teeth are not healthy enough for other tooth replacement options

What are the risks of wearing dentures?

- **Dental disease:** If dentures are not cleaned properly, this can increase the risk of dental disease such as decay and gum disease. Please read the Denture Care Leaflet on how to look after your denture and the risks associated with not cleaning it properly
- **Taste/temperature:** Dentures which cover the roof of the mouth can make it more difficult to taste food and detect temperature.
- **Looseness:** Some patients find dentures get loose over time
- **Comfort:** Some patients find it difficult to tolerate dentures and the impressions required to make dentures.
- **Removable:** Dentures are removable and should not be worn at night - some patients prefer teeth which stay in the mouth all of the time
- **Soreness:** Sometimes sore areas occur where the denture is rubbing or putting excessive pressure on the gums

What are the alternatives to dentures?

We will always discuss the options available to you in depth before any decisions are made. Such options may include:

- **A dental bridge** - the missing tooth is replaced using an artificial tooth which is supported by the neighbouring tooth. Bridges are only suitable in certain clinical situations.
- **An implant retained crown or denture** - implant screws placed into the bone allow a crown or denture to be clipped into place. Implants are not provided by dental undergraduates.
- **Accepting the gap(s)** where the teeth are missing and leaving the mouth as it is

What happens after treatment is finished?

After your denture is fit you will receive instructions on how to care for it. You will have a review appointment to make sure there are no problems with your denture. After this, you will be discharged to your regular general dentist. It is important that your denture is periodically reviewed to make sure it fits well and is not causing dental disease.

Please read the denture care leaflet for more information on how to keep your denture clean and the risks associated with poor denture hygiene.

To check that you and your dental professional are happy with the outcome of your treatment, you will be reviewed after your treatment is finished.

When all of your dental treatment is complete, you will be discharged from the dental school. We advise that you find a dentist outside the dental school to continue to look after your teeth and restorations.

Types of questions you may want to ask...

- How many appointments will it take to make my denture/s?
- How can I care for my denture?
- What should I do if my denture is not comfortable?

And finally...

Maintaining good oral hygiene is crucial for healthy teeth and gums and will help reduce the risk of decay and gum disease. Brush your teeth twice daily for 2 minutes with fluoride toothpaste and clean between your teeth with floss or interdental brushes.

Smoking and alcohol increase the risk of oral disease. If you want to quit smoking or reduce your alcohol intake, please talk to the clinician you see for further advice.

It is important to attend dental check-ups regularly, as this will help your dentist to identify any dental disease early.

Please ask at reception
if you require this
information in a
different language or
format.

Contact us:

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