

# Removable Dentures

## **What is a removable denture**

A removable complete or partial denture consists of replacement teeth attached to a pink or gum-colored plastic base, which is sometimes connected by a metal framework that holds the denture in place in the mouth. Partial dentures are used when one or more natural teeth remain to anchor the denture, and complete dentures are used when all teeth are missing.

## **What to expect**

In the beginning, your new denture may feel awkward or bulky, and may cause excessive saliva or gagging. This is normal, and you will eventually become accustomed to wearing it. Inserting and removing the denture will require some practice, but your denture should fit into place with relative ease. Never force the denture into position by biting it down.

**Sore spots:** Soreness from pressure on the gums and/or teeth may develop and is not unusual, especially if this is your first time wearing a denture. If you develop a sore spot please call our office so that it may be adjusted for you. Adjustments are expected and necessary as part of the process of wearing your new denture.

**Speaking:** Learning to speak with your new dentures in place requires some patience and perseverance. Reading aloud is a very good way to learn to enunciate distinctly, especially those sounds or words that are not clear. Try to avoid those movements of the lips and tongue that tend to displace the dentures or cause them to click.

**Eating:** Start by eating soft foods that require little to no chewing. Once you feel ready, begin by taking small bites and chew slowly, trying to overcome the difficulties as they arise. Keep the food distributed evenly on both sides and chew on the back teeth. To bite foods that normally require the front teeth, such as apples or corn on the cob, apply pressure backward against the front when closing. If the denture begins to dislodge, biting with the side teeth may be an easier alternative. More difficult foods that are fibrous (steak), hard (carrots) or sticky (bread) will require a gradual learning curve. Initially, it is recommended that you avoid chewing gum or attempt to eat sticky foods.

**Mouth and Denture Hygiene:** Clean your dentures with a soft brush and a denture cleaning product or soapy water daily. **You should remove your dentures every night** while sleeping to give your tissues a rest (unless instructed otherwise/during the first week following extractions). If possible, remove and clean dentures after each meal or snack during the day. When not wearing your dentures, place them in a small tub of water. This prevents them from drying out which could lead to loss of fit. At least once a week, place them in an enzymatic or special cleaning solution such as Polydent or Efferdent tablets.

**Never use toothpaste, bleach or mouthwash to clean or soak your denture.**

**Use of Adhesives:** There are many over-the-counter creams, powders and strips available to help secure dentures. In the beginning, it is best to try to avoid using any adhesives during the initial adjustment period. Adhesives may prove to be beneficial in some circumstances, especially in cases where there is very little bone remaining to support the denture (common with full lower dentures). If adhesive use is necessary, try a few different products and find what works best for you. With any adhesive product, use the minimum amount necessary to secure the denture in place.