

### Dentures

A denture is used to replace missing teeth. The denture enables the wearer to enjoy a varied diet, improved dignity, ability to speak and smile with confidence.

A full or complete denture replaces all the teeth in the upper and/or lower jaw.

A partial denture fills the space left by the missing teeth. It's a plastic, nylon or metal plate with false teeth attached to it. Partial dentures may have metal or acrylic clasps which grip the remaining teeth so they are stable and fit well.

### What does it look like/what I might a feel (symptoms)

Many people wear partial or full dentures. There are pros and cons to having a denture however most people get on well with them although they may take a bit of getting used to begin with – perseverance is key!

Dentures are good at replacing multiple teeth, helps restore and support facial profile, will help you eat a range of foods, talk clearly and feel good about your appearance. As they are removable this makes them easy to keep clean, and if you have a partial denture it is really important to look after the teeth that are left which support the denture.

### Possible treatment

#### **Immediate/temporary Dentures**

Your dentist will discuss your treatment plan with you. It may be indicated some teeth should be removed. If this is the case, an option could be to create an immediate or temporary denture. An immediate or temporary denture is fitted at the same appointment as the teeth are removed. The denture will need to be created prior to the fit - it's important to visit the dental team beforehand so measurements and impressions of your mouth can be taken. A dental technician will create the dentures using the measurements and impressions taken by your dentist to fit your mouth exactly. Having an immediate denture means you'll not have to be without teeth whilst the gums and bone are healing. However as the name suggests these are a temporary measure as the gums and bone will shrink after your teeth have been removed. This is part of the healing process and cannot be avoided. A more permanent option can sought once everything has fully healed. It can be best to wait for the gum and bone to heal prior to having a more permanent tooth replacement or denture fitted. Your dental team will advise about this. The time scale for healing is usually 2-3months.

#### **Permanent Dentures**

Unlike the immediate/temporary dentures, permanent dentures have more stages to construct them to ensure a more accurate fit and aesthetically pleasing end result. This can take between 4-5visits with your dentist having an appointment once a week. This allows the dental technician to complete each stage as the weeks go on so any necessary adjustments can be made. Even permanent dentures can become uncomfortable or lose they may need adjusting, relining or replacing over time.

It can be difficult coping with a new denture but it's important to persevere. Dentures are sometimes lost or become loose. A new replacement denture may be created which could feel very different. It can also be difficult to get used to if the person has to have a new denture made.

## **What can I do myself to help?**

If partial dentures are worn plaque can easily build up on them. It is possible plaque will accumulate and encourage gum disease and tooth decay. Even, if you wear full dentures and have no teeth (edentulous) it's important to look after your oral health.

Dentures should be removed and cleaned every day to avoid bacterial and fungal infections developing.

## **How to look after your dentures:**

- Remove dentures from the mouth
- Fill a bowl with water (or a towel) so that if they slip from your fingers they do not break
- Apply a special denture cleaning paste or unperfumed soap to a toothbrush
- Brush all surfaces of the dentures, including the clasps, to remove any plaque or food debris
- Rinse the dentures with cold water – hot or boiling water can damage dentures!
- Place them in a labelled denture pot or container
- Clean your remaining teeth both interdentally and with a toothbrush.



### **Four simple steps to keep dentures at their best**



If living in supported living accommodation or staying in a hospital a picture of a sunflower can be put in your room or by the bed. The sunflower scheme was instigated through the Mouth Care Matters initiative and helps to prevent dentures from becoming lost.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dentures/>



## **How much do dentures cost on the NHS?**

Having dentures made and fitted comes under a band 3 treatment charge. Read about [NHS dental charges](#) for the different bands and [getting help with dental costs](#).

Oral Health Foundation  
Health Education England - Mouth Care Matters  
Alzheimer's Society  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Review: June 2023