

LIVING AND LEARNING WITH YOUR NEW DENTURES:

Your new dentures will give you years of comfort and function but it may take time. These suggestions may help you in the process of becoming better acquainted with your new dentures.

- 1.** Sore spots may develop at ANY time and probably will do so: don't be surprised. They may appear the first day, or sometimes much later due to the normal settling of the denture. These need to be adjusted: don't expect them to disappear on their own. Please call for an appointment to have your dentures adjusted while your mouth is STILL SORE. Do not attempt to adjust them yourself because dentures can very easily be made worthless by a do-it-yourself adjustment.
- 2.** Do not expect your dentures to feel comfortable at first. The lower denture is almost always looser than the upper denture because of tongue actions and the lack of suction. All dentures move and tip as you chew. You will learn how to chew again over the next several weeks. Since the muscles of the cheeks, lips and tongue may displace your dentures, do not develop the habit of displacing or playing with them. Rather, train these muscles to assist in keeping your denture in place. If you are having trouble, we may be able to help you if you bring this to our attention. The use of a commercial denture adhesive may be necessary.
- 3.** Successful denture wearers have to learn how to wear them and so you must give adequate time to this learning process. Do not invite criticism of your dentures until you have worn them several weeks. Also, if you receive negative comments, do not let these comments discourage you. Just because a relative had no trouble with a denture doesn't mean you won't. Millions of people have adapted to wearing dentures. You can do it! After you have become accustomed to wearing them, you will feel much more confident about them. Please be patient.
- 4.** Patience is required when learning to eat with your dentures. At first, limit your diet to soft foods that are easy to chew. Ice cream, yogurt, applesauce, scrambled eggs, oatmeal, mashed potatoes, pasta, soup, Jell-O, pudding etc. are all great starter foods. Gradually learn to eat foods that are more difficult to chew. Take small bites and chew slowly, trying to overcome the difficulties as they appear. You are the only one who notices these difficulties, so don't worry or become upset. Learn to chew on both sides of your dentures at the same time as this helps them seat better and gives you a good feeling of control. When biting hard foods, press backwards against the front teeth when closing. Do not attempt to break off a bite of food as can be done with natural teeth. Don't expect miracles: many denture wearers are never able to eat a tough steak, apples or corn on the cob.
- 5.** Learning to talk with your dentures in place requires practice and time. You may find yourself lisping for a few weeks as your tongue needs to learn how to make the necessary sounds required for speech against the denture that it used to make against your natural teeth. Reading aloud is a very helpful way of learning to pronounce words clearly. Practice those words or sounds that give you the most difficulty and in time, you will sound like the "old" you again.

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6. Brushing the denture is recommended. Clean your dentures after each meal. Always clean them over a basin of water so that if they drop, the water will cushion the fall and prevent breakage. Recommended cleaning agents include regular toothpaste, a mild detergent or a commercial denture cleaning product. A specially made denture brush can be purchased to aid in keeping your dentures clean, although a regular toothbrush works as well. Never use scouring powder as this will wear away the surfaces of the denture. Use room temperature water for cleaning your dentures: do not use hot water as this can distort the denture. Soaking your dentures in a solution of 1 tsp. baking soda to 1 glass of water once a week for about an hour or so will correct any acidity in the dentures and help reduce any odors.

7. Do not be alarmed at the greater amounts of saliva in your mouth since your body will think the denture is food. This will self-correct with time and diminish in the first few weeks of wearing them.

8. The taste of food will be different since dentures often cover up some of the taste buds.

9. It is NOT necessary to wear your dentures at night unless you need to do so. Although some people can relax better if their jaws are supported by their dentures, others relax better without them in their mouth. It is recommended that you leave them out overnight. This prevents infection and helps to keep the underlying tissues healthy. If you leave them out, place them in a glass of water or commercial soaking agent so as not to warp them by drying them out.

10. Partial dentures have clasps which engage your teeth to keep the denture stable. These clasps suffer from metal fatigue with repeated removal and insertion of the denture, and may result in a loose fitting denture. These clasps need to be periodically tightened.

11. Shrinkage or resorption (dissolving) of your ridges is a normal occurrence. This results in a loosening of your dentures and perhaps a change in your facial appearance due to the settling of the dentures on the ridges. Sometimes you will notice these changes in a few weeks, in other people it may not occur for months or even years. Changes in your ridges are beyond the control of the dentist. It may become necessary to refit the dentures by a reline or by even remaking the entire denture.

12. Do not expect your denture to function as your natural teeth. Dentures are a substitute replacing your natural teeth. Learn to know the limitations of your dentures and adjust your living habits accordingly.

IF YOU FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS, I THINK YOU WILL FIND DENTURES WILL MAKE A SUITABLE REPLACEMENT.