

Caring for Your Dentures

- **Handle dentures with great care.** To avoid accidentally dropping them, stand over a folded towel or full sink of water when handling dentures.
- **Brush and rinse your dentures daily.** Like natural teeth, dentures must be brushed daily to remove food and plaque. Brushing also helps prevent the development of permanent stains on the dentures. Use a brush with soft bristles that is specifically designed for cleaning dentures. Avoid using a hard-bristled brush as it can damage or wear down dentures. Gently brush all surfaces of the denture and be careful not to damage them. In between brushings, rinse your dentures after every meal.
- **Clean with a denture cleaner.** Hand soap or mild dishwashing liquid can be used for cleaning dentures. Household cleanser and many types of toothpaste are too abrasive for your dentures and should not be used. Also, avoid using bleach, as this may whiten the pink portion of the denture.
- **Denture care when not being worn.** Dentures need to be kept moist when not being worn so they do not dry out or lose their shape. When not worn, dentures should be placed in a denture cleanser soaking solution or in water. Dentures should never be placed in hot water, as it can cause them to warp.
- **Can I adjust or repair my dentures?** One or more follow-up appointments are generally needed soon after you receive your dentures so that they can be adjusted. NEVER attempt to adjust or repair your dentures yourself. “Do-it-yourself” repair kits can permanently damage your dentures and over-the-counter glues may contain harmful chemicals. Dentures that need adjustments can cause irritation and sores in your mouth and on your gums. Be sure to contact our office if your denture breaks, cracks, or chips.
- **Will my dentures need to be replaced?** Over time, dentures will need to be relined, rebased, or remade due to normal wear, natural age-related changes to your face, jaw bones, and gums, or if the dentures become loose. Generally, complete dentures need to be replaced every 5 to 7 years.
- **How should I care for my mouth and gums if I have dentures?** Even with full dentures, it is important to brush your gums, tongue, and palate with a soft-bristled brush every morning before you put in your dentures. This removes plaque and stimulates circulation in the mouth. Clean, rest, and massage the gums regularly. Rinsing your mouth daily with lukewarm salt water will help clean your gums. Eat a balanced diet so that proper nutrition and a healthy mouth can be maintained.
- **How often should I see the dentist if I have dentures?** If you have dentures, your dentist or hygienist will advise you about how often you need to visit, but every 6 months is the norm. If you have an implant supported denture, you may need to come more often. Regular dental visits are important so that your denture and mouth can be examined for proper denture fit, to look for signs of oral diseases including cancer, and to have your dentures professionally cleaned.