

# Denture Care

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Dentures need as much care as natural teeth. Daily brushing and soaking are essential to prevent plaque buildup and to keep dentures looking their best. Plaque is a sticky film made up of bacteria, acid, and food particles. If not removed from dentures, it can spread to natural teeth and gums and cause gum disease and tooth decay, create mouth odor, promote infection, and irritate the tissues under your dentures.

Dentures are fragile and can break if dropped. When handling them, stand over a folded towel or basin of water. When not wearing them, keep dentures away from children and pets. When you remove your dentures, rinse your mouth to remove any bits of food or other debris.

Dentures, like natural teeth, also need to be brushed every day to keep your mouth healthy and your breath fresh. Regular brushing also prevents your dentures from becoming permanently stained. Use a denture brush, specially designed to clean dentures, or a regular soft-bristled toothbrush. Hard-bristled brushes can scratch your dentures, as can powdered household cleansers. You can use hand soap, mild dishwashing liquid, mildly abrasive toothpaste, or denture paste. Wet the brush and apply the paste, brushing every surface gently. Brush your gums, tongue, and palate with a soft brush every morning before you put your dentures back in. Remaining teeth should be brushed with a separate toothbrush and flossed as recommended.

Your dentures may be removed while you sleep or you may leave them in. While your dentures are out, soaking them can remove or loosen

light stains and deposits, and get rid of plaque microorganisms that remain after brushing. You can soak them in a half-vinegar, half-water solution, or a denture cleanser. If your dentures have any metal, use only water or the denture cleanser. Leave dentures in cool water or a denture solution when they are not in your mouth. Hot water may cause dentures to warp.

Dentures should be soaked in a cleaning solution (ie. Polident) for 15-20 minutes once a day, preferably overnight.

Although denture adhesives are widely marketed, they should only be used to provide extra hold for dentures that fit properly, not for dentures that fit poorly. Loose dentures are a sign that they need to be relined or rebased because of changes in the bone or gums. Small amounts of powder-type adhesive may help in some cases, but only a dentist should make this determination. Poorly fitted dentures held in place by adhesives can lead to severe mouth problems. If your dentures feel loose or are not comfortable, see your dentist immediately.

Avoid commercial denture relines and repair kits. Relining or adjusting dentures should be done by a dentist, as should repair of cracked or chipped dentures. You risk mouth problems and injuries by attempting repairs yourself.

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## For implant denture patients:

When you remove your denture, brush the exposed head and neck of your implant with a soft brush. If you have a bar, you need to clean the undersurface. Many aids are available to help with this and other hard to reach areas of the implant. A few suggestions are interdental brushes, Superfloss, interdental stimulators, and yarn.

## If you notice any of the following changes please let us know immediately:

- Pressure on gum tissue in the morning
- Difficulty in removing the denture
- Rocking or movement of the denture over the implant
- Premature contact (one side or area hitting first or too hard)
- Any pain, swelling, or inflammation

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