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Thank you for allowing us to provide you with your denture treatment

Information for Immediate First Time Denture Wearers

Dentures are often made to be ready before the tooth extraction appointment. The term “immediate denture” means it will be placed on the gums immediately at the time of the extractions. The denture acts as a band-aid, putting pressure on the gums to control swelling and bleeding. It also allows you to leave the office with a smile and circulate in public right away.

Before the dentist extracts your teeth impressions and models of your existing teeth will be made. Bite position measurements or try-ins may be needed as well. Your denture is then fabricated. Typically the denture will be ready before your extraction appointment.

What to expect: The denture will be placed in your mouth right after your teeth are removed. The initial fit of the denture may be tight or may be quite loose depending on the shape of your mouth, swelling and fluid in the mouth. The bite position can often be out of alignment due to the initial shape/ swelling of your gums. These things will be looked at as you heal in days and weeks to come.

If possible do not remove your denture for 24 to 48 hours after being inserted. It works well as a band-aid and helps control the swelling of the gums. Be prepared to eat a soft diet for several days until you are comfortable putting heavier pressure on the gums. Avoid hot drinks as they may scald you more easily. Follow the instructions of the dentist who extracted the teeth. You may be prescribed medication to help with any discomfort. Keep any follow-up appointments with the dentist.

When it's time, remove the denture over a sink and rinse your mouth **gently** with cool water only. Brush the denture clean with a denture brush or toothbrush. Don't leave the denture out of your mouth for more than 10- 15 minutes at a time the first 1-2 days. If it's out too long at first the gums may swell and you may not be able to re-insert the denture easily. Often the gums are a dark colour. The tissue may also slough off similar to a mild sunburn if you are a first time denture wearer. You may notice an odor and an off taste for several days.

It can take several weeks to several months for healing and adjustment to new dentures to occur. These changes can result in the following common issues, if any of these or other difficulties arise and persist please let us know and we will do our best to address them as quickly as possible:

Swelling and Sore Spots: Immediately after your teeth are removed the gums begin to swell with blood and fluid to start healing the area however, the swelling is often its worst 2 to 3 days after extractions. Often your saliva will increase for several days to help with healing. As the gums swell they begin to push outward in the denture. Often pressure sore spots develop on the gums due to this outward pushing. Sores can appear as reddened bumps or ridges with white broken skin in the middle. The area will also be tender due to the disturbed bone and gums.

After one to two days you may begin rinsing your mouth gently with a teaspoon of salt dissolved in a small glass of warm water. If done too soon it may interfere with the gums closing over. Remove the denture while you rinse your mouth and brush the denture clean with a denture brush available at most pharmacies. Rinse your mouth several times a day for the first week or so. The salt rinse helps with inflammation, healing sores and keeps the holes clear while they close.

Shrinking Gums and Sore Spots: After the swelling disappears the bone and gums begin to shrink inward, holes begin to close and pointed areas of gum between the teeth flatten out. The denture **can't change shape** with your mouth so a gap develops beneath the denture as the gums drop away. The denture may get very loose with little suction and sit unevenly as it balances on this now different gum line. This can cause increased gum soreness as pressure is put more heavily in spotty areas. The outer denture border tends to drop deeper as the denture drops further and can make sore areas around the edges.

Feeling of a full mouth: At first your mouth and lips can feel quite full. A denture may need to cover a portion of your palate and even have a layer between your lip or cheek and gums to hold itself in place. Over time your muscles begin to relax and adapt to the new shape and the denture will feel more a part of you. Temporary linings tend to add more thickness to the denture when used.

Slurred Speech, Lipping: Speech can be slurred at first as the tongue has unrecognized shapes to work around. The more you talk, sing, and read out loud with your denture the faster your muscles will learn to adjust. Dissolving a hard candy occasionally can help your tongue and muscles get used to the denture by distracting it away from the teeth while it rolls the candy around and works with the new space.

Difficulty Eating: Denture wearers are typically not able to put as much pressure on their food as they did with natural teeth. Eating smaller pieces of food in the area of the small molars (preferably on both sides of the mouth at once) helps gain optimum denture stability while eating. Back teeth are made smaller on purpose to avoid overstressing the gums and bone with pressure and in theory help preserve the remaining bone support. For some, covering the roof of your mouth with a denture can act like a blanket and change how you recognize hot and cold food on the roof of your mouth. A gag reflex may occasionally occur at first until you feel more relaxed with your dentures.

Tissue Conditioners, Relines and Rebases: The most rapid change of fit happens within the first few weeks of healing. A temporary soft tissue conditioning material can be put in the dentures to restore the fit and comfort as you heal. Several temporary linings may be needed over several months depending on how much the bone drops away.

It takes an average of six months for the bone and gums to fully heal solid and stable. Once healing is complete a permanent reline can be done. The reline allows the denture to permanently "catch-up" to how your mouth has changed by removing the inside of the denture, taking a fresh impression of your mouth and adding a layer of acrylic.

The denture teeth may need adjusting to realign the bite after these bone and denture changes are complete.

Tissue conditioners, permanent relining and remounting procedures are **billed separately** as needed.

Stability: Dentures float on your gums and will have some movement. Typically a lower denture moves most due to all the active muscles and the small area it sits on. We can't make a denture pinch to hold on, it can only mirror the way your bone is formed. If you find denture movement hard to tolerate over time you may be a candidate for implants. Implants are small permanent pins anchored in your bone. Your denture would have small attachments on the gum side to securely clip the denture in place. The denture can still be removed by you. You are able to chew with much more efficiency, be more comfortable and self-confident knowing your denture is anchored in place. We are happy to provide you with further implant information or a consultation if needed.

Esthetics: Since the denture is often made **before your teeth are removed** we are often unable to try the artificial teeth in to see how they will look. The esthetic look can often be improved if desired but we must work within the size limits of your bone and natural teeth/tissue positions. Your real teeth come straight out of the gum and are fixed in the bone by their roots. Denture teeth need a neck or ring of acrylic around them to hold them in the acrylic base **as they sit on top** of the gums. This needed extra plastic can occasionally affect trying to exactly duplicate the previous position and look of the original teeth.

Temporary Dentures: When many teeth are to be removed and esthetics is more of a concern we will often recommend or you may request the placement of a temporary denture first. This is a lower cost denture using lower quality materials and techniques to give a suitable denture for short term wear. It also makes a good back-up if you loose or break a finished denture. Once your gums heal we have the ability to make a higher quality denture by using more accurate impression techniques, jaw measurements, and setting and trying teeth in wax in the mouth to arrange them with much more visual control and your approval before we finish it.