

Dentures and implants are made to resemble natural teeth. There are four types of dentures and each is made to meet a specific need.

## 1. Fixed Bridge

This is permanently attached to healthy neighbouring teeth. It replaces missing teeth when surrounding teeth and gums are healthy.

## 2. Partial Denture (removable)

This is held in place with clasps that are attached to neighboring teeth. It replaces teeth that have been removed.

## 3. Complete Dentures

Dentures are needed when all natural teeth have been removed because of severe gum disease or other dental problems.

## 4. Dental Implants and Over-Denture

Implants are small metal posts that are surgically placed into the jawbone. The post gradually bonds with surrounding tissue and bone until it becomes a strong anchor that holds the over-denture. Over-dentures may be fixed onto the implants or may be removable for cleaning.

### Cleaning a Fixed Bridge

Brushing twice a day and flossing once a day are important for the health of the teeth, gums and bone supporting the fixed bridge. Aids to help in cleaning a bridge may include: floss threaders, interproximal brushes, superfloss or water picks.

### Cleaning Partial Dentures

Partial dentures must be removed and cleaned daily. Cleaning removes plaque and food particles that can cause stains, bad breath and gum irritation. Brush all surfaces, especially under the clasps where bacteria collect. Remember to clean the rest of your teeth, gums and tongue. At bedtime, place the partial in water.



**Clean your partial thoroughly with a toothbrush after each meal.**

### Cleaning Dentures

Dentures should be cleaned daily because plaque forms on dentures the same way it forms on natural teeth. Dentures are breakable and can break if dropped or squeezed too tightly. Place a towel in the sink. Fill the sink half full of water to prevent the denture from breaking if dropped.

Either a denture brush or a regular toothbrush with soft rounded bristles will clean all parts of a



denture. Denture cleaner, soap, dishwashing liquid may be used for cleaning dentures. There are commercial denture products available from your denture professional that are very effective for cleaning dentures.

Never use abrasive household cleaners, bleach or regular toothpaste. Rinse carefully in clean water before placing dentures back in the mouth.

### Cleaning Implants

Daily cleaning of implants and any fixed attachments is required and should be done with dental floss and/or a water pick device. Regular check-ups at your dental professional's office are required to maintain proper oral health, especially when implants are involved.

### Remove Dentures

Dentures need to be removed from the mouth for six to eight hours each day to give the mouth a chance to rest.

Remember to clean and massage your gums with a clean washcloth, or a soft bristled toothbrush. Brush your tongue too. This removes plaque and will improve circulation.

(turn over)



Accountable



Collaborative



Common Goals



Dedicated



Evidence-Based Practice



Wellbeing

### Soaking Dentures

At night, dentures should soak in lukewarm water. Use a half-and-half solution of water and vinegar to soften hardened plaque and remove light stains. Keep full or partial dentures in water when not in the mouth. This will stop dentures from drying out or warping.

**Note: if dentures have metal clasps use water only.**



Clean dentures and store them overnight in water.

### See a Dental Professional

The mouth changes often and regular dental appointments are necessary to keep a good comfortable fit. It is important to replace a worn or poorly fitting denture before it causes problems in the mouth.

Repairing or relining dentures at home may seriously damage both the dentures and your gums. Poor fitting dentures can cause sore spots that may need medical attention.

### Denture Tips

- You can expect some adjustment for the first month after getting a removable partial or full denture. If discomfort lasts longer than 3-4 days, contact your dental professional. **Do not make your own adjustments.**
- Poor oral hygiene can be the reason for denture discomfort.
- As we age, tissues become more sensitive to pressure and can cause sore spots. To ease discomfort, the mouth can be rinsed with baking soda and water or salt and water. If a sore mouth remains untreated it can cause other problems. Contact an oral health professional if the soreness continues.
- Ask your dental professional about a permanent soft liner as an alternative to the hard acrylic of which your denture is made.

### Xerostomia (Dry Mouth)

The following may be causes of xerostomia:

- Anxiety
- Cancer treatment
- Depression
- Diabetes
- Dieting
- Medication
- Mouth breathing
- Removal of glands
- Sjögren's Syndrome
- Thyroid problem

Dry mouth may make eating difficult and wearing dentures uncomfortable. To relieve the dryness, drink water more often. Avoid alcohol, tobacco products and beverages with caffeine.

### Calcium

It is important to maintain calcium intake throughout life. Calcium helps maintain strong bone structure, which is required for dentures and implants to fit properly.

Dentures and implants may help you to eat better, speak better, and give you a more youthful appearance. By taking care of your mouth you can enjoy a healthy smile for a lifetime.

**For further information, contact an oral health professional.**