



## Removable Partial Dentures

---

An important step in maintaining a healthy smile is to replace missing teeth. When teeth are missing, the remaining ones can change position, drifting into the surrounding space. Teeth that are out of position can damage tissues in the mouth. In addition, it may be difficult to clean thoroughly between crooked teeth. As a result, you run the risk of tooth decay and periodontal (gum) disease, which can lead to the loss of additional teeth.

A removable partial denture fills in the space created by missing teeth and fills out your smile. A denture helps you to properly chew food, a difficult task when you are missing teeth. In addition, a denture may improve speech and prevent a sagging face by providing support for lips and cheeks.

### Here are answers to common questions about partial dentures:

#### How do you wear a removable partial denture?

Removable partial dentures usually consist of replacement teeth attached to pink or gum-colored plastic bases, which are connected by metal framework. Removable partial dentures attach to your natural teeth with metal clasps or devices called precision attachments. Precision attachments are generally more esthetic than metal clasps and they are nearly invisible. Crowns on your natural teeth may improve the fit of a removable partial denture and they are usually required with attachments. Dentures with precision attachments generally cost more than those with metal clasps. Consult with your dentist to find out which type is right for you.

#### How long will it take to get used to wearing a partial denture?

For the first few weeks, your new partial denture may feel awkward or bulky. However, your mouth will eventually become accustomed to wearing it. Inserting and removing the denture will require some practice. Follow all instructions given by your dentist. Your denture should fit into place with relative ease. Never force the partial denture into position by biting down. This could bend or break the clasps.

#### How long should I wear the partial denture?

We will give you specific instruction about how long the partial denture should be worn and when it should be removed. Initially, you may be asked to wear your partial denture all the time. Although this may be temporarily uncomfortable, it is the quickest way to identify those denture parts that may need adjustment. If the denture puts too much pressure on a particular area, that spot will become sore. Your dentist will adjust the denture to fit more comfortably. After making adjustments, your dentist will probably recommend that you take the denture out of your mouth before going to bed and replace it in the morning.

### Will it be difficult to eat with a partial denture?

Replacing missing teeth should make eating a more pleasant experience. Start out by eating soft foods that are cut into small pieces. Chew on both sides of the mouth to keep even pressure on the denture. Avoid foods that are extremely sticky or hard. You may want to avoid chewing gum while you adjust to the denture.

### Will the partial denture change how I speak?

It can be difficult to speak clearly when you are missing teeth. Consequently, wearing a partial denture may help. If you find it difficult to pronounce certain words with your new denture, practice reading out loud. Repeat the words that give you trouble. With time, you will become accustomed to speaking properly with your denture.

### How do I take care of my partial denture?

Handling a partial denture requires care. It's a good idea to stand over a folded towel or a sink of water just in case you accidentally drop the denture. Brush the denture each day to remove food deposits and plaque. Brushing your denture helps prevent the appliance from becoming permanently stained. It's best to use a brush that is designed for cleaning dentures. A denture brush has bristles that are arranged to fit the shape of the denture. A regular, soft-bristled toothbrush is also acceptable. Avoid using a brush with hard bristles, which can damage the denture.

We recommend any denture cleaner with the American Dental Association (ADA) Seal of Acceptance.

Some people use hand soap or mild dishwashing liquid to clean their dentures, which are both acceptable. Other types of household cleaners and many toothpastes are too abrasive and should not be used for cleaning dentures.

Clean your dentures by thoroughly rinsing off loose food particles. Moisten the brush and apply the denture cleaner. Brush all denture surfaces gently to avoid damaging the plastic or bending the attachments.

A denture could lose its proper shape if it is not kept moist. At night, the denture should be placed in soaking solution or water. However, if the appliance has metal attachments, they could be tarnished if placed in soaking solution. Your dentist can recommend the proper method for keeping your dentures in good shape.

### Will my partial denture need adjusting?

Over time, adjusting the partial denture may be necessary. As you age, your mouth naturally changes, which can affect the fit of the denture. Your bone and gum ridges can recede or shrink, resulting in a loose-fitting denture. Partial Dentures that do not fit properly should be adjusted by your dentist. Loose partial dentures can cause various problems, including sores or infections. See your dentist promptly if your denture becomes loose.

### Can I make minor adjustments or repairs to my partial denture?

You can do serious harm to your partial denture and to your health by trying to adjust or repair your denture. A denture that is not made to fit precisely by a dentist can cause irritation and sores. Using a do-it-yourself kit can damage the appliance beyond repair. Glues sold over-the-counter often contain harmful chemicals and should not be used on a denture.

If your denture no longer fits properly, if it breaks, cracks or chips, or if one of the teeth becomes loose, see your dentist immediately. In many cases, dentists can make necessary adjustments or repairs, often on the same day. Complicated repairs may require that the denture be sent to a special dental laboratory.

### Must I do anything special to take care of my mouth?

Brushing twice a day and cleaning between your teeth daily help prevent tooth decay and gum disease that can lead to tooth loss. Pay special attention to cleaning teeth that fit under the denture's metal clasps. Plaque that becomes trapped under the clasps will increase the risk of tooth decay. We will demonstrate how to properly brush and clean between teeth. Selecting a balanced diet for proper nutrition is also important.