

Dentures

When Are Dentures Necessary?

Your dentist will recommend dentures as an option for replacing missing or if the current state of your natural teeth are beyond restoration. Situations that result in the removal of your remaining teeth are from:

- Severely decayed teeth when root canal therapy is not an option
- Advanced periodontal disease
- Failed root canal treatment
- Broken teeth beyond repair
- Fractured roots



Types of Dentures

- **Complete** dentures are used when no remaining teeth are in the upper or lower dental arch. They are designed to replace all the teeth in the dental arch. The different types of complete dentures include over dentures, immediate dentures, and conventional dentures.
- **Partial** dentures are used when one or more missing teeth are in either the upper or lower dental arch. Partial dentures use either metal or ceramic clasps to anchor onto the remaining teeth for stability.

Managing with Dentures

Wearing dentures for the first time requires some adjustments to your lifestyle for the first few months of wear. Choosing food that is soft and easily chewed is recommended until you are comfortable with the denture. Because of how dentures are constructed, speech may be affected for the first few weeks of wear. If you are having problems with pronunciation, try reading the newspaper aloud to practice your speech. Your bone and gums shrink over time, especially in the first six months after the extraction of the teeth. This may cause your dentures to become loose, causing them to click together when talking or eating, slip off the arch during activity, or if very loose, fall out of your mouth. A relining is a procedure that reshapes the denture to your dental arch by adding more acrylic material to the denture. Dentures that are newly fabricated or have been relined will require adjustments made by the dentist or denturist. This is necessary to relieve any pressure points on the gum tissue that may be causing you pain or discomfort, smooth any rough spots, and at times allow for the proper fit. These adjustments are very common and one should even expect the need for future appointments, to ensure your dentures give you the optimum fit and level of comfort you deserve.

Caring for Your Dentures

Even though dentures are made from acrylic and are not susceptible to tooth decay, plaque and calculus are still formed on them. Because of this, dentures require daily cleaning. Improper denture care will trap bacteria under the denture, causing irritation of the tissue and may cause mouth sores and lesions or thrush, an oral yeast infection.

Talk to Your Dentist

If you are unsure if dentures are right for your situation, make an appointment to discuss the treatment options that are right for you. If you are a candidate for dentures, your dentist may decide to refer you to a Prosthodontist (a dentist that specializes in the replacement of missing teeth, or denturist, who is a formally trained and licensed professional that takes the necessary steps in order to fabricate customized dentures).