



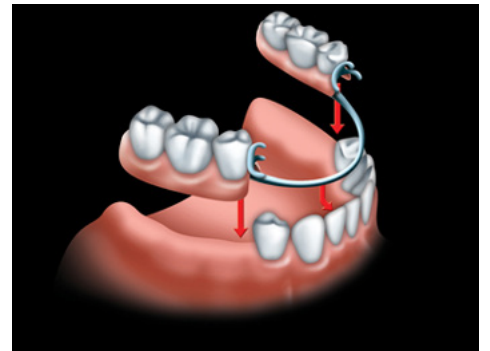
# DENTURES

Dentures are artificial replacements for your natural teeth and gums. If an accident, disease or poor oral health care has left you with only a few healthy teeth or none at all, your dentist or prosthodontist might suggest dentures to replace your missing teeth.

There are 2 types of dentures: partial and complete. For both types, your dentist or specialist makes a model of your teeth by taking impressions. The models are used to custom-make your dentures.

## PARTIAL DENTURES

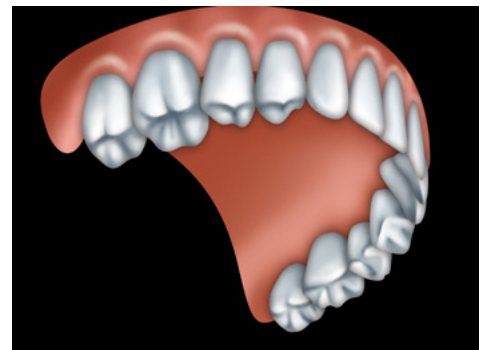
Also called “removable partial denture prostheses” or “partials,” partial dentures may be used when nearby teeth are not strong enough to hold a bridge, or when many teeth are missing. Partial dentures are made up of one or more artificial teeth held in place by clasps that fit onto nearby natural teeth. You can take the partial denture out for cleaning and at night.



A partial denture

## COMPLETE DENTURES

Complete dentures are what we most often refer to as “false teeth” or “full dentures.” They are used when all your natural teeth are missing. Complete dentures are removable and held in place by suction. They can cause soreness at first and take some time to get used to. There are 2 types of complete dentures: immediate dentures and conventional dentures.



A full upper denture

- **IMMEDIATE DENTURES** are made before your teeth are removed. Your dentist takes measurements and makes models of your jaws during your first visit. Once your teeth are extracted, your dentist inserts the immediate dentures. The benefit of immediate dentures is that you are not without teeth during the healing period, which can take up to 6 months. During the healing period, your bones and gums can shrink and your immediate dentures may need to be relined by your dentist for a proper fit.
- **CONVENTIONAL DENTURES** are made and inserted into your mouth after your teeth have been extracted and the gums and jaw tissues have healed.

## OVERDENTURES

An overdenture is a removable denture that fits over the natural teeth left in your mouth or over dental implants. If you have some natural teeth left, they are reshaped to fit in the denture. If there are no natural teeth left, small implants are placed into the jawbone. The overdenture attaches to the implants or rests on the natural teeth.

## DENTURE CARE

Complete and partial dentures need to be cleaned every day just like natural teeth. Otherwise, plaque and tartar can build up on your dentures and cause stains, bad breath and gum problems. Plaque from your dentures can also spread to your natural teeth and gums, causing gum disease and cavities.

Dentures can break if dropped or squeezed too tightly. When you are handling your dentures, stand over a folded towel or a sink of water just in case you accidentally drop them. Look for cracks in your dentures. If you find any, take them to your dentist or specialist for repair.

## TEETH AND GUM CARE

While your dentures are removed, be sure to clean and massage your gums. If your toothbrush hurts your gums, run it under warm water to make it softer or try using a finger wrapped in a clean, damp cloth. If you have partial dentures, brush your natural teeth with a soft-bristled toothbrush and floss.

## CLEANING DENTURES

To clean your dentures, remove them from your mouth and run them under water to rinse off any loose food particles. Then wet a denture brush or a regular soft-bristle toothbrush and apply denture cleaner or a mild soap. Household cleaners and regular toothpaste are too abrasive and should not be used for cleaning dentures. Gently brush all surfaces of the dentures including under the clasps where bacteria collect. Be careful not to damage the plastic or bend the attachments. Rinse your dentures well in clean water before placing them back in your mouth.

## OVERNIGHT DENTURE CARE

Always remove your dentures overnight to give your mouth a chance to rest. Soak them in warm water with or without denture cleanser. If your dentures have metal clasps, only use warm water for soaking, as other soaking solutions can tarnish the metal. When you're not wearing your dentures, keep them in water to stop them from drying out or warping. Never use hot water for soaking.

### VISIT THE DENTIST REGULARLY FOR ANY ADJUSTMENTS TO DENTURES

See your dentist regularly or at least once a year. Your mouth is always changing, so your dentures will need adjusting or relining from time to time to make sure they fit well. Poorly fitted dentures may cause denture sores that make oral cancer more difficult to spot. At your dental exam, your dentist will also examine your gums for any signs of disease or oral cancer and any natural teeth you may have for signs of decay or infection.

