

## POST-OP DENTURE(S)

### Denture

#### *Post Care Information*

**Proper denture care is important for both the health of your dentures and mouth. Here are some tips.**

**Handle dentures with great care.** To avoid accidentally dropping them, stand over a folded towel or a full sink of water when handling dentures.

**Brush and rinse your dentures daily.** Like natural teeth, dentures must be brushed daily to remove food and plaque. Brushing also helps prevent the development of permanent stains on the dentures. Use a brush with soft bristles that is specifically designed for cleaning dentures. Avoid using a hard-bristled brush as it can damage or wear down dentures. Gently brush all surfaces of the denture and be careful not to damage the plastic or bend attachments. In between brushings, rinse your dentures after every meal.

**Clean with a denture cleaner.** Hand soap or mild dishwashing liquid can be used for cleaning dentures. Household cleansers and many toothpastes may be too abrasive for your dentures and should not be used. Also, avoid using bleach, as this may whiten the pink portion of the denture. Ultrasonic cleaners can be used to care for dentures. These cleaners are small bathtub-like devices that contain a cleaning solution. The denture is immersed in the tub and then sound waves create a wave motion that dislodges the undesirable deposits. Use of an ultrasonic cleaner, however, does not replace a thorough daily brushing. Products with the American Dental Association (ADA) Seal of Acceptance are recommended since they have been evaluated for safety and effectiveness.

**Denture care when not being worn.** Dentures need to be kept moist when not being worn so they do not dry out or lose their shape. When not worn, dentures should be placed in a denture cleanser soaking solution or in water. However, if your denture has metal attachments, the attachments could tarnish if placed in a soaking solution. Dr. Sista can recommend the best methods for caring for your particular denture. Dentures should never be placed in hot water, as it can cause them to warp.

**Can I Adjust or Repair my Dentures?** One or more follow-up appointments are generally needed soon after you receive your dentures so that your oral health care provider can make any necessary adjustments. Never attempt to adjust or repair your dentures yourself. Never bend any part of the clasp or metal attachments yourself; doing so can weaken the metal structure. "Do-it-yourself" repair kits can permanently damage your dentures and over-the-counter glues may contain harmful chemicals.

Dentures that don't fit properly can cause irritation and sores in your mouth and on your gums. Be sure to contact your oral health care provider if your denture breaks, cracks, chips or if one of the teeth becomes loose. Oftentimes, he or she can make the necessary adjustment or repair on the same day. For some complicated repairs, your denture may have to be sent to a special dental laboratory.

**Will My Dentures Need to Be Replaced?** Over time, dentures will need to be relined, rebased, or remade due to normal wear, natural age-related changes to your face, jaw bones, and gums, or if the dentures become loose. To reline or rebase a denture, the dentist refits the denture base or makes a new denture base and reuses the existing teeth. Generally, complete dentures should be used for 5 to 7 years before a replacement is necessary.

**How Should I Care for My Mouth and Gums if I Have Dentures?** Even with full dentures, it is important to brush your gums, tongue, and palate with a soft-bristled brush every morning before you put in your dentures. This removes plaque and stimulates circulation in the mouth. 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. Rinsing your mouth daily with lukewarm salt water will help clean your gums. Eat a balanced diet so that proper nutrition and a healthy mouth can be maintained.

**How Often Should I See the Dentist if I Have Dentures?** If you have dentures, Dr. Sista will advise you about how often you need to visit, but every 6 months should be the norm. Regular dental visits are important so that your denture and mouth can be examined for proper denture fit, to look for signs of oral diseases including cancer, and to have your teeth professionally cleaned.

If you have questions about the fit or care of your dentures, please call our office (713) 526 2904 to schedule a follow up appointment at your earliest convenience.