

Oral hygiene instructions for the denture patient

1. Rinse the dentures and brush away plaque and food debris regularly (several times daily). Place the dentures gently into a container of the cleaning solution to continue the cleansing and disinfection process. A recommended cleaner is Sparkle Dent, which is available through our office.

CAUTION: *Dentures may be slippery and can fall onto a hard surface and break the pink acrylic and / or the denture teeth. Always clean dentures over a soft towel or over the sink with the basin half full of water.*

CAUTION: *Using a stiff or hard bristle denture brush on the inside of the denture can wear grooves in the acrylic and over time may cause the dentures to fit poorly. Be sure to use a soft bristle brush and wet the brush in warm water to soften the bristles prior to use.*

2. While dentures are soaking in solution, use a clean washcloth dampened with warm water (or salt water solution) to wipe the inside of the mouth. Use enough pressure to stimulate circulation to the tissues on the inside of the mouth. Massage and clean the ridges under the dentures, the tongue, lips, cheeks and palate. The cleaning of the mouth should be done at least once or twice each day. Tongue cleaners / scrapers are very effective to remove plaque and food debris from the tongue.
3. After cleaning the mouth with the dampened washcloth, rinse the mouth with a solution of warm salt water as follows: ½ teaspoon of salt in a tall glass of warm water (approximately 8 oz.) Rinse with salt water for 20 seconds. Repeat until the glass is empty.
4. After denture cleaning, remove dentures from solution and use a washcloth, Q-tip or cotton ball to polish the inside of the dentures. You may use a moistened denture brush with toothpaste, denture toothpaste or soft soap on the outside of the dentures to clean around the teeth. Use a mouthwash to give a fresh taste and clean feeling.
5. Next, **thoroughly rinse** the dentures with water and re-insert into the mouth.
6. At night, we recommend taking your dentures out. This allows the tissue to breathe and heal by removing the pressure that is placed on the gums and tissues. Dentures should be kept in water or mouthwash when out of your mouth to prevent distortion and maintain their proper fit. We understand that due to social situations, comfort or established habits, leaving the dentures out at night may not be possible. In those instances, meticulous denture cleansing and oral care is extremely important to maintain tissue health.

Remember that the gum tissue is in a constant state of change, but the dentures are not. Over time your dentures may loosen and need to be professionally relined or possibly replaced. We recommend that you have the fit of your dentures checked **annually** by a dentist, as well as having an **annual oral cancer screening examination**.

Ideally, these cleaning instructions should be followed several times per day. This will keep your dentures from staining and help keep your breath fresh. Remember that wearing dentures provides a good environment for an increase in bacteria, fungus, and other organisms that can cause inflammation, soreness, and unhealthy tissues. Unhealthy tissues are easily injured during eating or wearing your dentures resulting in sore spots. If you have a history of chronic soreness and discomfort wearing dentures, you should be very careful in your oral hygiene and seek professional dental assistance.

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Karl K. Wirtz, D.D.S., P.C.