

THE HARLEY STREET ORAL
RECONSTRUCTION CENTRE

What's the best way to care for removable dentures?

Removable partial or full dentures require proper care to keep them clean, free from stains and looking their best. If you still have some remaining teeth then keeping your dentures clean ensures that the teeth will be healthier. For good denture care:

- **Remove and rinse dentures after eating.** Run water over your dentures to remove food debris and other loose particles. You may want to place a towel on the counter or in the sink or put some water in the sink so the dentures won't break if you drop them.
- **Handle your dentures carefully.** Some partial dentures may have metal clasps. Be sure you don't bend or damage the plastic or the clasps when cleaning.
- **Clean your mouth after removing your dentures.** Use a soft-bristled toothbrush on natural teeth and gauze or a soft toothbrush to clean your tongue, cheeks and roof of your mouth (palate). If used, remove any remaining denture adhesive from your gums.
- **Brush your dentures at least daily.** Remove and gently clean your dentures daily. Soak and brush them with a soft-bristled brush and nonabrasive medium such as liquid hand soap or a specialised denture cleanser to remove food, plaque and other deposits. If you use denture adhesive, clean the grooves that fit against your gums to remove any remaining adhesive. Don't use denture cleansers inside your mouth. Using special denture cleaning brushes may help you clean them more efficiently. These can be purchased over the counter and examples are shown below.



- **Clean your dentures in a denture cleaning solution.** Mechanical cleaning is not enough to keep the dentures clean as microorganisms tend to colonise small porosities which exist in the acrylic. It is therefore essential that the dentures are cleaned every day in a denture cleaning solution using tablets which can be purchased over the counter (examples are Retainer Brite and Steradent, but may other brands have the same efficiency). Please note that if your denture has any metal parts you have to avoid certain denture cleaning tablets which will indicate on the package that they are not to be used with any metal parts.
- **Soak dentures overnight.** Ideally, dentures should not be worn at night in order to minimise any inflammation in the oral environment. Most types of dentures need to stay moist to keep their shape. Place the dentures in water or a mild denture-soaking solution overnight. In specific instances your dentist might ask you not to

soak the dentures at night but to keep them dry in a box. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on cleaning and soaking solutions.

- **Rinse dentures thoroughly before putting them back in your mouth, especially if using a denture-soaking solution.** These solutions can contain harmful chemicals that cause vomiting, pain or burns if swallowed.
- **Schedule regular dental check-ups.** Your dentist will recommend how often to visit to have your dentures examined and professionally cleaned. Your dentist can help ensure a proper fit to prevent slippage and discomfort, and also check the inside of your mouth to make sure it's healthy.
- **See your dentist if you have a loose fit.** See your dentist promptly if your dentures become loose. Loose dentures can cause irritation, sores and infection.

You typically should avoid:

- **Abrasive cleaning materials.** Avoid stiff-bristled brushes, strong cleansers and harsh toothpaste, as these are too abrasive and can damage your dentures.
- **Whitening toothpastes.** Toothpastes advertised as whitening pastes often contain peroxide, which does little to change the colour of denture teeth.
- **Bleach-containing products.** Don't use any bleaching products because these can weaken dentures and change their colour. Don't soak dentures with metal attachments in solutions that contain chlorine because it can tarnish and corrode the metal.
- **Hot water.** Avoid hot or boiling water that could warp your dentures.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have further questions.

Four simple steps to keep dentures at their best

