



## Patient Instructions: Caring for Your Denture

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Your beautiful new denture has been hand crafted to look as natural as possible. The individual colors in the gums will last the life of the denture if you properly care for them.

### Storage

To avoid warping, your denture should always be stored in water when not in your mouth.

### Adhesives

Denture adhesives can improve the retention and stability of your denture and reduce the accumulation of food particles beneath your denture.

1. Use three or four pea-sized dollops on each denture; if you begin to require an increasing amount of adhesive to maintain the same level of retention, please make an appointment to evaluate the fit and stability of your denture.
2. Completely remove denture adhesives from your denture and your mouth on a daily basis.

### Daily Care

1. Remove the bacterial biofilm and any residual adhesive from your mouth with a washcloth.
2. Remove the bacterial biofilm and any residual adhesive from your denture by soaking\* and brushing.  
\* The temperature should never be hotter than you would wash your hands with.  
\* To protect the colors, do not use bleaching products or any denture cleansers that contain bleach.

Options:

- a. Soak for 15 minutes in a solution of equal parts water and white vinegar. This will make hard calculus/tartar deposits soft enough to remove with a toothbrush.
  - b. Soak in an effective, non-abrasive denture cleanser, following the manufacturer's recommendations.
    - Denture cleansers should ONLY be used outside of the mouth.
    - Always thoroughly rinse after soaking and brushing with denture cleanser before reinserting your denture into your mouth.
3. For the health of your mouth, do not wear your dentures for more than 24 hours continuously.
  4. Leave your denture out of your mouth during showering.
  5. Consider NOT wearing your denture when sleeping.

### Yearly Recommendations

To minimize biofilm accumulation over time, bring your denture back to our office for an annual ultrasonic cleaning. Additionally, an annual check-up is recommended for maintenance of optimum denture fit and function and for an assessment of your overall oral health status.

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## Patient Instructions: Caring for Your New Teeth

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Now that you have your new dental restorations, it is important you ensure their lasting strength and beauty. Proper homecare will preserve their original shine as well as maintain the health of your surrounding gum and bone. By avoiding certain foods and habits, you will minimize the threat of breaking or discoloring your new teeth.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. How can I best care for my dental restorations?

Daily brushing and flossing are necessary to maintain the health of your teeth and dental work. Use a soft toothbrush with an appropriate toothpaste. Many types of toothpaste, including all “whitening” toothpastes, are too abrasive and will take the shine off your restorations. Your dental provider will suggest a toothpaste with a low abrasive index and preferably with fluoride to keep your natural teeth strong.

The use of an appropriate mouth rinse is an effective way to promote your dental health. Your dental provider will suggest a non-acidic mouth rinse that contains both fluoride and xylitol. Avoid using mouth rinses that contain alcohol as these tend to burn your tissue and break down the cement that keeps your dental restorations in place.

#### 2. What can I eat with my dental restorations?

Your dental restorations should look and feel like a natural part of your mouth. You will be able to enjoy a wide variety of foods with your new teeth. Having said that, there are certain foods and eating habits that are prudent to enjoy in moderation or avoid altogether.

To decrease the risk of chipping or debonding a dental restoration, try to avoid:

- Using your teeth to scrape or pull meat off a bone
- Biting into raw carrots or other very hard foods
- Chewing toffee or other dense, sticky foods

To decrease the risk of staining or dulling your restorations, try to enjoy the following in moderation:

- Intensely colored foods and beverages such as berries, tea, coffee, red wine and dark soda or fruit juice
- Acidic foods and beverages such as citrus fruits, iced teas and sodas
- Smoking and chewing tobacco can cause severe discoloration of your teeth and should be avoided.
- Alcoholic beverages will hasten the demise of bonded restorations and should be enjoyed in moderation.

#### 3. Are there things that might harm my new teeth besides eating?

Many oral habits can damage or dislodge dental restorations. You should not use your teeth for anything other than chewing food. Avoid such habits as:

- Chewing pencils, toothpicks or ice cubes
- Biting your nails
- Opening bags, containers or bottles with your teeth
- Cutting fishing line or sewing thread with your teeth

#### 4. Will my teeth be sensitive after my new restorations are placed?

Mild sensitivity is common following the permanent placement of your dental restorations. The gum surrounding your new teeth, as well as your jaw muscles, may be tender for a few days. Your teeth themselves may be sensitive to cold, hot and chewing. Sensitivity to cold takes longest to resolve, but generally your teeth will feel normal again within a month. If sensitivity persists for more than 3 months you should notify your dental office.



## Patient Instructions: Caring for Your Temporary Restoration

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Your temporary is made to last for at least a few months. This allows us to evaluate any potential problems prior to your final restoration.

### 1. Normal Expectations You May Experience

- Some temperature sensitivity by the second day. This will likely resolve.
- Some tenderness around the gum tissue for a few days.
- Some biting soreness, but should only last a few days.
- Anything beyond these mild symptoms, please contact the office.

### 2. The Tissue Around Your Temporary Must Be Kept Very Clean and Healthy

Flossing and brushing are the most important things you can do to ensure good tissue health.

### 3. The Temporary Must Stay in Place

Your temporary is held in place with weak cement. Occasionally, it may loosen or come off before it should. If this happens, it may cause inflammation in the gums, more tooth sensitivity, or the tooth may move. Any of these conditions may delay timely placement of the final restoration.

### 4. To Prevent Loosening

Be careful with biting and chewing foods. Avoid hard, tough, crunchy and/or sticky foods. However, you will need to floss differently. After introducing the floss between the teeth, merely pull the floss through the side. Avoid pulling up on the temporary. Substitute floss with Opalpix.

### 5. What to Do If It Comes Off

Call us. We would like to recement it for you in a timely manner. If you cannot come in, replace the temporary with finger pressure or secure it with a small amount of denture adhesive such as Poli-Grip or Fixodent until you can arrange with our office to come in.

### 6. To Prevent Staining, Avoid the Following

- No mouth rinses that contain chlorhexidine
- Smoking
- Turmeric
- Minimize berries, coffee/tea

Please call us if you experience any conditions that in your opinion seem to be out of the ordinary.

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## Patient Instructions: Caring for Your Nightguard

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Your new nightguard is a custom appliance made just for you. With proper care, it can last you for many years.

### Recommendations:

**Daily** – To help your nightguard last, perform properly and remain free of bacteria;

- Wear your nightguard every night as prescribed by your dentist. Not wearing your nightguard daily may lead to it not fitting properly, your teeth chipping or breaking.
- Floss and brush your teeth each time before wearing your nightguard. Food trapped in and on your teeth may not let your nightguard seat properly.
- After wearing your nightguard, it is important to clean it before you place it in the case. Soak it for 15 minutes in a solution of equal parts water and white vinegar. The solution will remove stains and help to disinfect it.
- Once a week you should cleanse the nightguard outside of the mouth. Using your toothbrush brush the nightguard with toothpaste or denture cleanser (Polident, Efferdent). Be sure to thoroughly rinse the nightguard before placing it back in your mouth.
- Visually check your appliance for any chips or cracks before placing it in your mouth. If the nightguard is damaged, see your dentist as soon as possible to have it repaired or replaced.

### Dental Maintenance

- Bring your nightguard with you during your maintenance and treatment visit. Your dentist will continue to re-evaluate or may need to modify it.

### Do Not

- Use any abrasive cleaners as this may damage the nightguard.
  - Use any cleaners containing alcohol, this can discolor and weaken the nightguard.
  - Use water hotter than you would wash your hands with, this may warp the nightguard.
  - Force your nightguard to place by biting it. Doing this may chip or break the appliance requiring a new one to be made. See your dentist as soon as possible to have the fit of the nightguard checked.
- Your nightguard is made of **acrylic** and **should** be stored in water when not in use
- Your nightguard is **3D printed or milled** and **does NOT** need to be stored in water when not in use

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## **Patient Instructions: Following Sodium Fluoride Varnish**

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After the application of fluoride varnish you will feel a coating and may notice a difference in color while the varnish remains on your teeth. To obtain the maximum benefit during the 4-6 hour treatment period, we ask that you take the following care after you leave our office:

- Do not remove fluoride varnish by brushing or flossing for at least 4-6 hours.
- If possible, wait until tomorrow morning to resume normal oral hygiene.
- Eat a soft food diet during the treatment period.
- Avoid hot drinks and products containing alcohol (i.e., beverages, oral rinses, etc.) during the treatment period.

A thorough brushing and flossing will easily remove any remaining fluoride varnish. Your teeth will return to the same shine and brightness as before the treatment.

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## Patient Instructions: Instructions Following Oral Surgery

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### **Pain Reduction Protocol:**

You may have moderate discomfort after the anesthetic wears off. Most discomfort can be controlled with a combination of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory ibuprofen (2 tablets Advil, 400 mg in total) and analgesic acetaminophen (2 tablets extra strength Tylenol, 1000 mg total). These should be taken every 8 hours. If you have any contraindications to taking either of these medications, please check with your physician.

### **Post Operatively:**

- Do NOT rinse your mouth for the first 24 hours following the procedure
- Keep your head elevated during the first evening
- Discontinue your usual exercise regime for 1-2 days
- Restrict yourself to a soft diet
- Do NOT smoke which delays healing and irritates the tissues.

### **Bleeding:**

- Do not be concerned if you see traces of blood in your saliva for several hours after the procedure. It is not uncommon to have slight bleeding.
- If the site continues to bleed apply constant pressure with gauze or a moistened tea bag for up to 1 hour and repeat if necessary.

### **Swelling:**

Some swelling is to be expected. To help reduce this, ice packs may be applied to the outside of the face over the area of surgery for twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off for the first 24 hours following surgery. (Ice cubes in a plastic bag work as nicely as an ice pack). If swelling and discomfort persist, warm wet compresses may be used over the area on the second and subsequent days. These are to be applied for twenty minutes on and forty minutes off for three hours each day. However, if swelling persists and continues to increase, you may have an infection. Call your dental office.

### **Oral Hygiene:**

After surgery it is important to keep your teeth and mouth as clean as possible. Beginning the day after the procedure, warm salt-water rinses (1/2 tea spoon salt mixed with 6 oz. of warm water) can be used 2 times a day. During the first week, please carefully brush the treatment area. Please practice excellent oral hygiene as instructed for the rest of your mouth.

### **Antibiotics:**

Antibiotics may be prescribed depending upon the surgical procedure. It is important that they are taken as directed.

### **Nutrition:**

Maintaining an adequate diet after surgery is important. Chew on the opposite side of your mouth and avoid extremely hard or spicy foods. Select foods that provide nourishment with little, if any, necessary chewing. Avoid the use of straws for drinking to prevent blood clot dislodgement.

### **Post-Operative Appointment:**

You may be seen for a post-operative appointment within 10 days – 2 weeks following surgery.



## Patient Instructions: Nightguard Use

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“What you can do for yourself may be more important than what we can do for you.”

### Control Muscle Abuse

- Avoid sleeping on your jaw
  - Try a cervical pillow
- Use your appliance as directed
  - Every time you sleep
    - When not wearing it, clean it, then store in the case
- Avoid chewy foods or any foods that fatigue your muscle
  - Ice, raw vegetables, hard crusted bread, apples, and large sandwiches
- Avoid clenching your teeth
  - “Lips together, teeth apart”
- Consider muscle strengthening exercises

Type of Stretching	Main Characteristics	Parameters	Purpose
Static stretching (passive)	A specific position is held with the muscle in tension to the point of a stretching sensation	10-30 s (<90 s), 2-4 repetitions	Improve range of motion prevent injury improve performance
Active dynamic stretching	Gently propelling the muscle toward the maximum range of motion	3-6 repetitions of 15-30 s	Improve viscoelasticity improve range of motion

- Do not open too wide
- Limit caffeine within 6 hours of bedtime
  - Healthy diet, adequate sleep, and exercise
- Apply moist heat/massage twice a day
- Take medication as prescribed
  - Ibuprofen
  - Naproxen
  - Other

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## Patient Instructions: Teeth Bleaching

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### To Obtain the Best Bleaching Results:

- Before bleaching, thoroughly brush and floss your teeth to make sure you remove any plaque and food particles so the bleaching gel will make contact with the surfaces of your teeth.
  - While bleaching, please do not drink liquids or foods that stain your teeth such as coffee, red wine, etc.
1. Fill the bleaching trays with a pea size amount of material provided. Properly filling the bleaching trays is critical to achieving maximum whitening results, because it ensures a proper seal of the bleaching trays.  
  
Dispense a dab of bleaching gel into each tooth on the inner side of the outer walls of the bleaching trays, **EXCEPT in the second molars and around any porcelain restorations.**
  2. Seal the bleaching trays against your teeth.
    - a. Place the bleaching trays over your teeth, and push the trays firmly onto your teeth.
    - b. The thick gel will push the sides of the tray away from the teeth at the gum line a little. **It is very important to gently push the tray back against the teeth.**
    - c. You should see just a little excess gel has squeezed out of the edge of the tray as the trays are gently pushed back against the teeth.
    - d. If you see an excessive amount of gel, the trays have been **overfilled**. If you see no gel has squeezed out, the trays have been **under filled**.
    - e. Adjust accordingly the next night.
  3. Wear the trays for only 30 minutes the first night to determine if your teeth experience sensitivity.
    - a. **If you experience sensitivity**, we recommend the use of CTX4 gel or MI Paste to be placed in the tray immediately after bleaching for 30 minutes. Use this as your preferred toothpaste the entire time until the end of your bleaching process.
    - b. Note: The CTX4 gel can also be used to replace your current toothpaste.
  4. Then on **the second day and subsequent days**:
    - a. Wear the trays for 30 minutes, remove the trays, rinse the trays with cool water.
    - b. Reapply fresh bleaching material and then replace the tray back over your teeth in the same manner for another 30 minutes.
  5. When You Remove Trays:
    - a. Upon removing the trays, rinse your mouth and clean your bleaching trays with cool tap water.
    - b. **Avoid using warm or hot water**, as it could affect the fit of your trays.
    - a. Shake the excess water off the trays and place them back into the tray container. **Do not close the container. Leave the case open so the trays will dry out before the next use.**
  6. **In most cases, the desired results can be obtained in 2-3 weeks but in some cases of very discolored teeth, the process may take longer.**