

Dentures and Bridges



Dentures

Dentures replace missing teeth and their adjacent tissues with a removable dental appliance made of acrylic resin and, in some cases, a combination of metals.

There are four primary types of dentures:

- Complete - This type of denture replaces all of the teeth and their adjacent tissues.
- Partial - Partial dentures act as dental bridges as they "bridge" the gap between a missing tooth or teeth.
- Conventional - Conventional dentures allow a recovery time (usually four to eight weeks) after all of the teeth are extracted before the dentures are placed in the mouth.
- Immediate - This type of denture does not allow a healing period after all of the teeth are removed. The denture is immediately fit into the mouth after all teeth are removed. Additional adjustments in the fitting of this type of denture procedure may be necessary as healing occurs.

Oral health care and dentures:

- Daily remove and brush the denture carefully with a brush and toothpaste, both specifically designed for denture cleaning.
- Avoid cleaning and/or sterilising your denture in boiling water, or damage to the denture is likely to occur.
- If a partial denture is in place, remove it before brushing the natural teeth.
- Once removed, keep the denture in a safe place, out of the reach of children.
- Once removed, soak the denture in a proper cleansing solution or water.
- Have teeth cleaned every 6 months by an oral health professional.

Bridges

A dental bridge is an appliance used to replace one or more missing teeth. These appliances are cemented into place and cannot be removed by the patient.

Most bridges are made of a pontic or false tooth, held together by two crowns (a "cap" that covers the tooth, approximating its normal size and shape). This trio is then attached (cemented) to the abutment teeth (the surrounding teeth of each side of the gap).

Who is a candidate for bridges?

Nearly everyone who has one or more missing teeth is a candidate for a dental bridge. However, the difference between proper and improper oral hygiene is, generally, what determines the success of the dental bridge.

Types of dental bridges

- Traditional bridge - a pontic tooth is held together by two crowns (a "cap" that covers the tooth, approximating its normal size and shape). This trio is then attached (cemented) to the abutment teeth.
- Resin bonded bridge - this type of bridge involves the pontic (false) teeth being fused together to metal bands, bonded to the back of the abutment teeth with a resin cement.
- Cantilever bridge - most appropriate when there is only one abutment tooth on either side of the span.

Oral health care and bridges:

- Brush your teeth carefully after every meal with fluoride toothpaste and a soft-bristled toothbrush, as food may become lodged causing the gums and teeth to become infected. This may lead to further complications resulting in the loss of the bridge.
- Floss daily. Your dentist, or other oral health specialist, may recommend using a floss threaded for hard-to-reach places between the bridge and its adjacent teeth.
- Have your teeth cleaned every six months by an oral health professional.