

5 minute read

Dentures and good oral health

By Dr Sulhi Abidin (</authors/dr-sulhi-abidin>) - December 18, 2018 @ 11:41am

Dentures should be well-fitted and properly maintained for maximum benefit, writes Dr Sulhi Abidin

A DENTURE is a type of dental prosthesis made of plastic (acrylic) or metal. It is usually fabricated for the patient to replace missing teeth. Dentures serve several functions based on patients' needs such as to restore aesthetic, modify speech (phonetics), enhance chewing ability and efficiency (function), improve patients' self-confidence as well as quality of life.

However, how many denture wearers are aware of the importance of keeping their dentures clean and safe?

There are situations where dentures cannot be worn. The conditions are as follows:

1. Dirty or non-hygienic dentures.

An old denture may be covered by stains or dental plaque which encourages germs (bacteria or fungus) to harbour on the surface. This condition may lead to the formation of denture stomatitis or oral candidiasis.

2. Partially or completely cracked dentures

Soft tissue trauma may be triggered by the sharp edges around the fractured margins.

3. Unstable dentures

These kind of dentures may fracture in the mouth or may cause temporo-mandibular joint (jaw joint) pain.

4. Painful dentures

The dentures are causing pain which can lead to the formation of oral ulcers (under the denture-bearing area).



USE IT RIGHT

THERE are guidelines to ensure dentures are safe to be used. These include:

1. The denture must ideally be cleaned after every meal using a soft brush and denture cleanser under cold running tap water.
Any denture adhesive (denture glue) must be wiped off before cleaning.
2. The denture must not be worn during sleep unless it is really needed. Instead it should be kept in a closed container filled with tap water.



Dentures should be stored in a closed contained filled with tap water.

3. Unhealthy or unhygienic dentures must be discarded and replaced with a new set.
4. A faulty denture (cracked, unfitted or unstable) must not be worn at all as it may cause soft tissue injury. Patients are advised to visit their dentist for repair or even fabrication of a new set.
5. The denture should ideally be replaced every five years. Dentures may become worn down, stained or even "unaesthetic" over time.
6. If the denture is causing pain which leads to the formation of oral ulcers, it should be checked for the possibility of overextension on the denture borders or it may be due to heavy occlusion. After the denture has been adjusted, a review appointment needs to be conducted.



Proper cleaning is a must after every meal.

An awareness towards denture care and hygiene should be inculcated to improve oral health related quality of life among denture wearers.



Dentures must be properly fitted.

*The writer is a lecturer in prosthodontics at the International Islamic University of Malaysia.

313 reads

RELATED STORIES



(/topics/infographics/2017/08/274147/importance-oral-health)

Importance of oral health
(/topics/infographics/2017/08/274147/importance-oral-health)



(/news/2016/10/178505/coffee-good-health-and-sex)

Coffee is good for health and sex (/news/2016/10/178505/coffee-good-health-and-sex)



(/news/2017/03/225030/exercise-good-health)

Exercise for good health (/news/2017/03/225030/exercise-good-health)