



Patient Information Leaflet **Dentures**

Cork University Dental
School & Hospital



This leaflet has been designed to explain dentures and it contains answers to many frequently asked questions. If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer, or if you would like further information, please ask us.

What is a denture?

A denture is a removable prosthesis – ‘false teeth’ – to replace one or more missing teeth.

Why do I need dentures?

It is not always necessary to replace missing teeth but you may want to replace them to help you speak, chew food properly as well as giving you back your normal smile. Dentures can also prevent your remaining teeth from moving and tilting into the gap left by the missing teeth.

What is involved in having dentures?

There are two different types of dentures – acrylic (plastic) and metal (cobalt-chromium) dentures. Your dentist will talk to you about each type of denture and recommend the best type for you.

First, an impression is taken of your mouth and a made-to-measure denture will be made based on this impression. Sometimes adjustments may need to be made to your existing teeth at this stage. Next, there will be a series of appointments (4 - 5 visits ranging from 1 hour to 3 hours long) during which the dentist or dental student will work on building and shaping the denture. In between visits, your dentures will be sent to the laboratory for further work.

A trial version of your dentures made from wax will be fitted so that you and your dentist can assess the fit, retention, comfort and appearance of the dentures. When you are both happy, the trial denture will be sent to the laboratory to be finished.

Will I feel pain during treatment?

Getting dentures made and fitted should not be painful. You will not need any local anaesthetic. You can expect to feel some mild discomfort and you might have a few sore spots when you start wearing your new denture. This is normal when the dentures are settling in. We will arrange appointments for you to deal with these sore spots until the dentures feel comfortable.

How long does the treatment usually take?

The process of making new dentures takes months as they are sent to the laboratory between visits. The timeframe also depends on how complex your case is. If you need teeth removed before the denture is made, this will make the process longer as your mouth needs to heal.

Are there risks associated with dentures?

The main risk associated with dentures is periodontal (gum) disease and dental decay in teeth beside the partial denture if it is not looked after properly. Your dentist will advise you about the best way to take care of your dentures.

This leaflet is available online at <http://www.ucc.ie/en/dentalschool/patients/>