

COMPLETE, PARTIAL AND IMPLANT DENTURES

There are many reasons why people have missing teeth. Decay, periodontal disease and accidents are the main reasons that patients will lose teeth and need replacements. There are a number of treatment options available to replace teeth and restore their function. The treatment choices are fixed bridgework, complete or partial dentures and implant retained dentistry.

Partial dentures are removable and are sometimes referred to as a removable bridge. This is to differentiate between non-removable, fixed bridges that are attached to the natural remaining teeth by crowns. Partial dentures will fill in the spaces created by the missing natural teeth, enhancing your chewing capabilities, and prevent the other natural teeth from changing position.

There are generally two types of complete dentures. One is the traditional denture, which is made when there are no upper and/or lower teeth present. The other is the immediate denture, which is made from models of the mouth before the teeth are removed. They are finished and ready to be placed in the mouth immediately after the extractions have been completed.

The main advantage to immediate dentures is that the patient does not need to be without teeth while healing. The disadvantage is that the dentures are made while the natural teeth are still present and cannot be assessed for appearance and fit before they are placed in the mouth, as with traditional dentures. Therefore, it is possible that after complete healing, the patient may need a traditional denture made to replace the immediate denture. However, the immediate denture can still be worn until the traditional denture is ready. If the appearance and function of the immediate placement denture is acceptable, they will then need to be relined (refitted) to the healed level of the gums approximately two to three months after the extractions. Immediate dentures may also need numerous adjustments after placement, while the gum and bone shrinks and heals from the extractions.

All dentures will eventually require periodic adjustments. They will need to be relined every two to three years and remade every seven to ten years. This is because without natural teeth, the height of the remaining bone level will not remain constant causing the dentures to become loose and ill fitting over time.

To help remedy this situation, dental implants should be considered. With the placement of implants, the bone level will not diminish and the removable dentures can be secured to the implant. This will create a more stable denture and improve one's ability to chew. In certain situations and with the appropriate number of implants, dentures can be made so they will not need to be removed. Whether a patient has new dentures or has worn dentures for a number of years and requires a new set, dentures will fill out your facial features and improve your smile.