

# Dentures 101

What you should know about dental prostheses



Designed to replace missing teeth and adjacent tissues, dentures are prosthetic devices that can give you the look and function of real teeth.

**Did you know**  
that 178 million  
Americans  
have lost at  
least one  
permanent  
tooth?

## Types

- **Complete dentures** replace all the teeth. They can be either immediate dentures (placed right after tooth removal) or conventional dentures (placed at least a month later).
- **Partial dentures** fill in gaps between existing teeth.

## Advantages

- Improve chewing ability
- Make it easier to speak clearly
- Provide support for facial muscles
- Restore natural appearance of face
- Keep surrounding teeth from shifting

# The do's and don'ts of denture care

## Do...

- Remove and brush dentures every day
- Take out partial dentures before brushing your natural teeth
- Use a soft brush and cleanser designed specifically for dentures
- Soak dentures in water or a cleanser when you're not wearing or brushing them
- Visit the dentist regularly — even if you've lost all your teeth, the dentist will need to examine your mouth for signs of gum disease, oral cancer and changes in your bone
- Tell your dentist if your fit becomes uncomfortable

## Don't...

- Place dentures in hot water
- Use harsh cleansers such as bleach, regular toothpaste or baking soda
- Wear dentures at night, unless recommended by your dentist — this helps your gum tissue rest and stay healthy
- Use denture adhesives to secure ill-fitting dentures
- Try to adjust your dentures yourself

## Alternatives

Dentures may not be the right choice for everyone. If you're looking for a more permanent option, ask your dentist about bridges and implants. Please refer to your plan details for information about your coverage.



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