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Getting Along With Your New Denture:

Early in your life (between the ages of six and twelve) you gradually become accustomed to your natural permanent teeth, which, according to Nature's Plan, erupted one at a time. Now, suddenly, you have completely new teeth in the form of an artificial denture. Please don't expect too much too soon. Becoming accustomed to your new denture *will take time*. **Patience** and a **Positive Attitude** will be your most valuable allies. Remember, many others have traveled this road and have attained comfort and reasonable function. **YOU CAN TOO!**

Speech Difficulties:

You may encounter some speech problems at first. This is normal. The muscles that shape the mouth and lips must become accustomed to the new shape and feeling of the new denture. We suggest that you read aloud **thirty (30) minutes a day for several days**. With practice, you will learn the tricks necessary to control the denture, and speech problems will disappear. For example, if you form the "th" sound, as in the word "the" your tongue will be in its natural position to seal the lower denture. If you lift the tongue too high or pull it back too far, the seal will be broken and the denture will become dislodged.

Once the muscles are trained, you can almost forget the denture. However, remember to maintain control whenever you sneeze or cough.

Sore Areas:

Your new denture may create some tissue discomfort. If you should develop a sore area, please call our office; but **continue to wear the denture** so that we can pinpoint the problem. We will make the necessary adjustment for you. **Please DO NOT attempt to adjust your own denture!** There are many things that must be evaluated before a denture can be properly and comfortably adjusted.

After the initial adjustment period, soreness may still occur occasionally. Leaving the denture out of the mouth for a short time will normally eliminate this problem. A warm salt water rinse (1 teaspoon of salt to a glass of water) will be helpful. If you have high blood pressure, substitute the mouthwash of your choice for salt water rinse.

Be careful when handling your denture. Always store it in water (if only for a few hours) to prevent the acrylic from becoming distorted. A distorted denture can easily cause soreness. Disregard the comments of another person who may say, "I never had a bit of discomfort when I had my dentures made." Time tends to dim the memory.

Chewing Function:

Learning to eat normally will require some effort on your part. For the first few days eat soft foods. As you become accustomed to your dentures, you may progress to solid food. Cut your food into small bites and chew slowly. Dentures require that you chew your food for longer periods of time to achieve the same effect as having natural teeth. As a plus, the more time you take to eat, the faster you master your denture. Remember, compared to natural teeth, *the denture offers only about thirty (30%) of the function power!*

Place half of each portion of food on the right side of your mouth, and the other half on the left side to distribute the chewing pressure evenly. Chew slowly, and chew "at" your food, instead of "through" it. Try to relax and avoid chewing vigorously as this may cause soreness.

Don't attempt to eat an apple or corn on the cob immediately, as you must master the simpler things first. With time you will become confident in your ability to eat normally (using common sense, of course, in the selection of your food).

If you should experience difficulty keeping the lower denture in the proper position when talking or eating, it may be the result of troublesome tongue habits. The tongue should touch the inner surface of the lower denture and not be pulled away from it when talking or eating.

A Clean, Comfortable Denture:

Cleanliness is the key to comfort. Only a clean denture is a comfortable denture. Just as natural teeth must be brushed regularly, so should your denture. It takes only a few minutes. The denture brush, designed specifically for this purpose, is available at any drug store.

When cleaning your denture, fill the sink with warm water to prevent breakage in case the denture should slip from your hands. Hold the denture just above the water and brush it thoroughly inside, outside and between the teeth. Never use hot water or gritty powders. There are several toothpastes made specifically for dentures.

Soaking in denture solutions may be helpful as they are specifically designed to remove stain and leave a pleasant taste on your denture. However, remember that the denture "soaks" are chemicals and they can, and will, eventually bleach the "gum" coloring out of your denture. We recommend their use no more than twice weekly. There is absolutely **NO substitute for BRUSHING the plaque and debris from your denture.**

If your mouth has a tendency to form tartar deposits, it is important to regularly remove the tartar from the denture. At least once a week, place your denture in full-strength white vinegar overnight. The acid in the vinegar will soften the tartar deposits so that they can be removed easily with toothpick and brush. Your denture will have no odor as long as it is clean.

We recommend **annual visits** to check oral tissue conditions, and the fit and function of your dentures.

Crisis Prevention:

An extra denture is a wise precaution, especially for anyone having public contact. Emergencies cannot be predicted, and every practicing dentist has encountered a frantic patient with a pressing engagement and a broken denture.

Longevity:

The assumption that dentures will last a lifetime is incorrect, because the *denture* will not change, even though the *tissues* in your mouth *will*. This inevitable change will result in an ill fitting, uncomfortable denture. Relines or even a new denture will be necessary to correct this problem. The average service life of dentures is approximately **seven (7) years**.

Please do not experiment with your dentures. Never try to repair, relin or adjust your denture yourself. These "do-it-yourself" jobs can be very destructive to the tissue and the bone ridge on which the denture rests. Only a dentist is *qualified* to refit your denture properly.

Part of You:

Accept your new denture as if it were your natural teeth. Do nothing to call attention to your mouth. Wear your denture constantly and it will become a part of you. Above all, we can thank modern denture technology for enabling us to provide a far better service than what was available even a few short years ago.

Our sincere wishes for the very best dental health!

Sincerely,

The Doctors of Champlain Dental Group, LTD.