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Instructions for handling, care and maintenance of complete dentures

Description

Full dentures are a treatment for total edentulism using artificial teeth-bearing oral appliances, which replace lost natural teeth and rehabilitate bone structures that atrophy over time after tooth loss. Therefore, they not only serve to improve chewing, but also speech and aesthetics, which are greatly impaired in the completely edentulous patient.

Limitations

Lacking support to the bone, these devices experience a certain amount of mobility when eating, especially the lower one, which is easily displaced by the tongue even when speaking, because it does not achieve a suction cup effect like the one provided by the palate. to the upper device. Thus, when you bite on one side, they tend to rise on the other, so you must learn to chew with both sides at the same time. An aesthetic limitation, derived from this instability, is that with complete dentures the anterior and upper teeth cannot always "ride" on the anterior and lower ones, as normally occurs in natural dentition, but rather the cutting edges in these situations have to be at the same height as the grinding face of the rest of the teeth; For this reason, when there are anterior and lower natural teeth, the teeth of the upper prosthesis are usually shorter than their original teeth, and by being hidden under the lip they simulate a greater age than with natural teeth. Over time, the bone on which the prosthetic devices rest changes shape, so they will loosen and may cause discomfort or ulcerations that require adaptation by the dentist, and replacement, after a variable time, for new ones.

Instructions for handling, care, and maintenance

- **Adaptation and habituation**

Do not forget that the complete denture is a very complex rehabilitation (one of the most difficult). That is why your collaboration is very important, until the complete adaptation, which will require some time.

- At first:

- You will notice a sensation of occupation or foreign body, which normally disappears in a few weeks.
- The production of saliva will increase, although it will gradually normalize.
- You will initially experience a decreased sense of taste, which will recover after a few weeks.
- Your speech will change a bit, and there may be phonetic problems to pronounce some sounds. For this reason, you will probably need training to learn how to vocalize certain words; Usually this learning is achieved in a few weeks.

- It is likely that he bites easily on the cheeks and tongue, due to his tendency to enter spaces where teeth are missing, but in a short time he will learn to avoid it.
- You may notice some discomfort in the areas where the prostheses rest, especially at the edges: If they increase or do not subside after four or five days, and if wounds form, you should go to the clinic.
- Prostheses will probably move a lot at first, especially when eating. You must learn to chew simultaneously on both sides, and not on just one, as you would with natural teeth. With this, and with the successive adjustments of the tooth engagement that may be necessary, you will experience improvement, but the lower denture, with rare exceptions, will never hold satisfactorily.

- **Recommendations**

The first few days, try to close your mouth and chew carefully, so as not to bite yourself and not overload your gums.

For the same reason, you should initially chew soft, non-sticky foods gently, gradually moving on to eating more consistent products.

Strive to remember that chewing must be done on both sides at the same time.

To treat the wounds caused by bites (generally very painful), you can use soothing and healing mouthwashes, ointments, or gels, on which your dentist will advise you.

If you have intense pain when biting, or injuries appear, go immediately to the dentist's office, so that he can make the appropriate relief in your prostheses and prescribe, where appropriate, soothing, and healing mouthwashes, ointments or gels.

You should also go to the dentist if you have tolerable discomfort that does not improve or subside in four or five days.

There are some products (mouthwashes, ointments, and powders) that favor the retention and adaptation of the prosthesis in your mouth. Before using them, you should consult your dentist, but you should know that they are not "miraculous".

Avoid, when handling them, that your prostheses fall to the ground, as they can fracture, especially the lower one.

- **Placement and removal**

Full denture appliances must be placed in place and always wet, inside the mouth, with the fingers. Never insert and bite on them without being properly seated, because you can fracture them or injure your gums. After removing them, also with your fingers, wash them and place them in a glass of water.

- **Care and hygiene**

After each meal you should rinse the dentures and the mouth.

Dentures should be cleaned, at least once a day, with a special brush for dentures (sold in pharmacies) or a nail brush with nylon bristles, and a little toothpaste or, better, soap, to avoid tartar formation and deposit of stains. Then rinse them very well with water.

It is convenient to remove the prostheses to sleep, so that the mucous membranes rest daily for a few hours. In the case of the lower prosthesis, it is essential to avoid choking during sleep. While you sleep, the prostheses should be kept in a humid environment, preferably in a glass of water, to which you can add disinfectant tablets marketed for this purpose.

Reviews and incidents

Whenever gum discomfort appears, you should go to a consultation, although at first, as this discomfort is normal, you can wait four or five days. If after this time they have not disappeared, or if they worsen as the days go by, you should go to the dentist.

If a problem arises, do not try to solve it yourself: See your dentist.

The gums, over time, undergo modifications and with this mismatch occur in the prostheses that must be corrected by the dentist. Among the adaptive corrections that must be carried out from time to time (variable, depending on the case), are relines, which consist of filling the areas of the prostheses that have lost contact with the mucous membranes with resin (plastic).

improve adhesion. For this reason, routine check-ups with the dentist or stomatologist should be carried out every six months.