

Immediate Dentures

Immediate dentures are a good treatment choice for many people. The procedure of extracting teeth and placing immediate dentures can be completed in one day. Each patient's healing time and ability to accommodate to an immediate denture varies. This requires using your tongue, lips, and cheek muscles to learn to control them.

Following the extractions, the patient must now heal from multiple extractions and get adjusted to wearing a "plastic/acrylic" plate with teeth on it. Once all the teeth are extracted, the bone and gum begin healing, but also starts to change (remodel) and will begin to "dissolve" (resorb) over time. This occurs because the teeth are no longer present to help protect the bone from pressure. Then, over the next few months and through the next year or so the bone in your jaws will resorb from 10-20% or more until the bone/gum tissue stabilizes. Since the bone/gum shrinks back as healing occurs, the current immediate denture(s) will loosen up and may not be as retentive as it was at the time of original placement. So, immediate dentures are relined three times with a soft tissue conditioner reliner material to help cushion the hard denture base against the healing extraction sites. Later, usually after about 6 months, a hard reline of the denture is then made for you to accommodate the fit to the new shape of the bone/gum.

An upper denture has more surface area with a full palate (roof of the mouth) to create a "suction" seal, whereas a lower denture has virtually no real seal and uses gravity to sit on the lower bone. It is controlled with your lips and tongue. Over the next months to years the bone in the jaws will resorb due to pressure of the denture pressing on the bone/gum, and probably require another reline of the denture.

Dental implants can help hold a denture in place, or retain a denture and act like tooth roots to help preserve the bone and prevent it from resorbing away. This is even more important for lower dentures which have much less retention as compared to the upper denture. The standard of care for a mandibular denture to place at least 2 dental implants in the lower front part of the jaw (mandible) to secure the denture to the implants with attachments. The attachments and implants connect the bone/gum and denture and keep it securely in place. An added benefit is to help protect the bone/gum from the constant force and pressure of a loose lower denture which will help prevent future loss of the bone.

Once the healing has occurred and the dentures have been adjusted, the dentures can be used as a template to help place the implants in their correct positions. So, the timing for implants is ideal once the patient has adjusted to the dentures. However, immediate placement of implants with the original surgical appointment of the extractions and denture placement can also be done.

If you have any questions about immediate dentures, please feel free to ask us.