

Replacing Missing Teeth - *Partial Dentures*

by Scott F. Kenward, DMD

Occasionally, for various reasons, the replacement of missing teeth by dental implants or a fixed bridge is not possible. Fortunately, modern dental technology has provided us with some excellent techniques for replacing these important missing teeth.

A *removable partial denture* is a restoration that usually consists of replacement teeth, attached to gum-colored plastic bases, which are connected by a metal framework. Partial dentures are held in place by attaching them to the remaining natural teeth. This *attachment* must be flexible enough to allow the denture to be removed and reinserted, and strong enough to prevent the denture from loosening and coming out.

Metal clasps, or hooks, are the most common type of attachment, but they offer problems: they are often visible and detract from your smile, they loosen easily, and teeth can decay under them.

At Last: Cosmetically Designed Partial Dentures

The *precision attachment* is an excellent solution to these unsightly problems. A *precision partial denture* replaces missing teeth and restores your bite with a better fit and appearance than traditional partial dentures.

Precision attachments allow as close to a natural feeling and appearance as possible. They are invisible, rigid and provide a secure feeling to the denture. They will not cause decay. The teeth to which the precision attachments are connected must be fitted with crowns, since that is how the attachment is connected to the tooth.

Flexible Partial Dentures

For patients that require a metal-free partial denture, or in cases where precision attachments are not feasible, the *flexible partial denture* can provide a comfortable and esthetic restoration of missing teeth.

Utilizing their thermoplastic properties, these lightweight dentures blend naturally with the teeth and gums to give a precise fit with superior strength and comfort when compared to the uglier, bulkier, metal clasp based dentures.

The strength of the material and resistance to chemical breakdown provides a long-lasting, unbreakable partial. By distributing the stress more naturally in the mouth compared to conventional partials, the remaining teeth and gums typically stay healthier longer than with a conventional partial.

Complete biocompatibility is achieved because the material is free of monomer and metal, these being the principle causes of allergic reactions in conventional denture materials.

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Personalized Treatment

No one style or design of removable partial denture is best for everyone. Each patient is a unique individual with specific needs and concerns. Your dentist and your dentist's team of highly skilled laboratory technicians, surely look forward to helping you discover which tooth replacement method is best for you.

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