

## DENTURE ADVENTURES

- Dentures are a poor substitute for natural teeth but they work better than a false eye. You can't see with a prosthetic eye. Millions of people have learned to talk and eat with dentures successfully.
- **Getting used to your dentures:** New teeth, whether you have worn dentures before or not, feel big, cumbersome and uncontrollable. The wearer may think that instead of teeth, blobs of plastic were placed in their mouth. Giving the new teeth time will help tremendously. It is important that you are specific in telling the dentist exactly where your dentures hurt or feel wrong. In doing so, she can take care of your problems early. Just remember that the upper denture usually feels too long in the palate and the lower feels loose. The dentures are fitting correctly if you have no sores, you do not have the sensation of a sore throat, and you can't tell where you hit first when you bring your teeth together.
- **Speech:** It is not uncommon to lisp, hiss and garble your words with new dentures. Your tongue has to relearn how to form words. When you get your new dentures, read or sing aloud as much as you can until your speech becomes natural sounding. It is difficult for others to hear the difference in speech that you perceive.
- **Eating:** Remember you have a mouth full of plastic. Dentures only give you 20% of the chewing ability you had before you lost all your teeth. Do most of your chewing with a knife and fork. Cut up your food into tiny pieces. Try to put foods on both sides of your mouth and chew evenly. This may be difficult because natural teeth chewers move the bolus of food from one side to the other. Avoid sticky and crunchy foods until you are confident eating soft foods like pastas, meat loaf, scrambled eggs and baked or mashed potatoes. You may never be able to eat corn-on-the-cob, lettuce, a thick hamburger, or a sugar daddy. If you can, we'll celebrate.
- **Sleeping:** You should not sleep with your dentures, just as you should not sleep with shoes, wigs, eye glasses, or your watch. Your gums need the time to relax and breathe. Another reason is that you may find them in the bottom of your sheets or on the floor when you awaken. If you are embarrassed having your teeth out, then take them out when you are bathing.
- **Adhesives:** Even though upper teeth usually have suction, the strength of that suction may not be stable enough for you. Lower teeth rarely have suction and are usually retained by using your tongue and cheek muscles to orient them in place. If you feel insecure and want more confidence wearing your denture, then use a powder, fabric or paste adhesive. Follow the instructions on the package and make sure you brush all of the adhesive from your gums and denture before placing more. It can also be removed with a wash cloth and very hot water. Adhesives have a carbohydrate base and are a great medium for the growth of fungi and bacteria. If replaced daily and not used at night, adhesives are safe and comfortable.

**SHELLY L. FRITZ, DDS**  
**7520 MONTGOMERY NE, E-12**  
**ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87109**  
**888-6980**