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## Dentures: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You (1973)

American Dental Association

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### Recommended Citation

American Dental Association, "Dentures: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You (1973)" (1973). *Patient Dental Health Education Brochures*. 120.

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DENTURES:

What  
you  
don't  
know  
can  
hurt  
you

## The health of your mouth affects every major aspect of your life.

Good nutrition, clear speech and a pleasant appearance are vital to your physical and emotional well-being. They depend on healthy teeth and gums.

□ Your dentist's first goal is helping you to keep your teeth and gums healthy for a lifetime. But if you should lose your natural teeth through accident or disease, he will provide you with the most effective possible dentures.

□ If dentures are needed, safeguard your health. Work with your dentist, for he is the **only one** qualified to provide professional denture services.

## Complete denture health services are the professional responsibility of the dentist (DDS or DMD).

The dentist's broad professional background prepares him to evaluate all aspects of your oral health and their relationship to your general health. His education includes the study of facial structure, oral anatomy, psychology, general and oral pathology, physiology, pharmacology and dental materials.

□ The dentist first reviews your general health. Then he makes a thorough diagnostic examination of your mouth. He searches for conditions that are not always obvious, such as cysts, tumors, inflammation, loss of bone, impacted teeth and retained roots.

□ After any of these problems have been properly treated, the dentist takes detailed impressions of your mouth. Then he prescribes dentures designed to work together with facial muscles, bones and soft tissue.

## Auxiliary personnel may be involved in the construction of dentures.

Many dentists work with technicians who help in the actual construction of dentures. Technicians may be employed in the private dental office or in a commercial dental laboratory.

□ Many dental laboratory technicians have learned their mechanical skills during on-the-job training. At the present time more technicians are entering the field with a background of one or two years of formal training after high school.

□ Technicians are not permitted by law to treat patients, for their training, formal or informal, does not prepare them to diagnose or prescribe. They must follow the dentist's work authorization exactly.

□ When the dentures are finished, the dentist carefully examines them in the patient's mouth, making adjustments as needed. He advises patients as they learn new speaking and eating habits, and counsels them if necessary on the mental and emotional adjustments that sometimes follow.

Your general well-being and your oral health depend on each other. **Protect them both!**

## Regular oral health examinations are a most important part of denture health services.

All living tissue changes constantly. The changing shape of gums and bone will gradually affect the fit and function of dentures. At least annually, the dentist needs to examine the dentures and the oral tissues.

☐ “Do-it-yourself” repairs or relinings may damage mouth tissues. Whenever dentures are loose or uncomfortable, a dentist should be seen for the necessary adjustments.

☐ From time to time, changes may become so great that the dentist will need to prescribe new dentures.

☐ When ill-fitting dentures are worn for a long time, serious problems can arise. These may include eating problems, difficulty in speaking, and destruction of bone needed for denture support. Constant irritation, if continued over a long period, may contribute to the development of oral cancer.



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Produced in cooperation with the  
Federation of  
Prosthodontic Organizations.