

## Why are dentures important?

Dentures are important for **eating, speaking, socialising** and dignity.

If a denture is lost or broken, it may not be possible for patients/residents, especially those who are frail or have dementia, to adapt to new dentures or cope with the stages of remaking the denture. This may mean that the patient/resident is unable to have teeth again.



## Where are dentures lost?

**Anyone** is at risk of losing their denture.

Being in a hospital or community residential settings increases the risk of this happening. Most common places that dentures are lost are:

1. Left in bed linen
2. Wrapped in tissue (e.g. on meal tray and when mistaken for rubbish)
3. During patient transfer (e.g. wards/theatres)
4. Vomiting (lost down a toilet or in sick bowls)

**NHS**  
England



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DENTAL OFFICER  
ENGLAND

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England

# Safe Denture Care



**Leaflet For Use in Hospital and  
Community Residential Settings**

In England alone estimates suggest **more than 14,000 dentures** are lost in hospitals and care homes every year.

**7 in 10** care homes reported a resident losing a denture over the last 2 years.

## Oral Care Assessment for Denture Wearers

All patients in hospital for more than 24 hours and residents as soon as transferred, should have a oral care assessment completed.

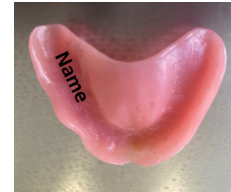
Important things to consider:

1. Ensure oral care **equipment** (toothbrush, toothpaste, denture storage) is available to the patient/resident.
2. Does the patient/resident **need help** brushing their teeth?
3. Does the patient/resident **wear a denture?** If yes
  - Record if it is a top denture or a bottom denture.
  - Ensure the patient/resident has a named container to store their denture. There are special containers that can also store glasses, hearing aids and other personal belongings.



## How should dentures be cared for?

- **Remove at night** to allow mouth time to rest
- Take dentures out to clean
- Brush at least **twice** daily using toothbrush and liquid soap/ toothpaste
- When dentures are not in the mouth they should be in a labelled denture container



## What to do when dentures are missing?

Look for the denture **around the patient**  
e.g. bed linen, tissues, cupboards



Look in areas where patient have **recently been** e.g. other wards, emergency department, radiography



**Raise** with senior nursing/management team



Complete an **incident report**



Senior nursing/management team to **decide** if hospital/community residential setting will cover cost of new denture



**Advise patient on how to access a dentist**

## How is a denture remade?

Replacing a denture can be difficult, taking multiple (usually at least 6) dental appointments.

When a denture is not found, patients/residents should be given advice about booking a dental appointment which may include:

**Own General Dentist or via NHS Choices/NHS 111**

**Community Dental Services** provide dental care for people with additional needs for example people with dementia or severe physical disabilities. A referral from a health care professional is generally needed.

**Domically Dental Services** for patients who are housebound, again a referral is needed.

**Private Dentist**

## How much do new dentures cost?

The cost of a denture on the **NHS is £306.80.**

**Private costs are typically between £500 – 2K** depending on the need for specialist treatment.

