

A Loose Set of Teeth...

Of all the treatments we provide for patients, removable partial dentures (partials or partial plates) are one of the least accepted and least understood. Imagine a form fit hunk of metal, plastic, and teeth. They look esthetic and often fit quite well, but rarely make patients happy. They also tend to give patients the most problems.

Imagine that you are missing a number of teeth in the bottom of your mouth. A few are gone on the back right, maybe one lost in the front, as well as a couple teeth missing on the back left. The ideal treatment to replace these teeth would be dental implants. A number of implants could be placed in good bone and new teeth could be built on top of them. Nothing to take out and clean at night, nothing for food to be trapped under, nothing to bother your tongue, nothing to worry about...you would have your teeth back.

Unfortunately, there are sometimes factors that do not allow for this ideal implant treatment. Without burying ourselves in the details, let us assume that our friend, Mrs. Lucy Partial, has a partial denture that she does not like. Her main concern is that the partial plate moves up and down when she eats. She is uncomfortable in public because she feels like it may fall out at any time. She wants to be confident in her teeth while eating, talking and smiling, but does not have the resources to get a full set of implants and new teeth that don't come out.

We can help Mrs. Lucy Partial.

Quite often, dentists can use an existing denture or partial denture and retrofit attachments and implants to hold them in place. In human terms, we can make Mrs. Partial happy with her current teeth by adding a couple of implants to snap the partial into place when she eats, talks, and smiles. Often, these things snap in so tight I'd swear you could hang from a trapeze with them.

After a thorough diagnostic exam, we can usually find a few sites between teeth to place some type of dental implant. The surgery for this type of implant (those that are used to "snap in" partials or dentures), is quick and painless. We can often convert or modify the current plate on the same day of the surgery so that it fits and feels better. In just a few hours, Mrs. Lucy Partial can walk out with a better fitting set of teeth and more confidence.

If you or someone you know is unhappy with their replacement teeth, see your dentist about what options may be available. Floppy teeth can usually be improved.

Until next time, keep smiling.

-Please send comments to Drs. Parrish through www.ParrishDental.com.