

We have created this sheet to help address some of the most common questions asked by dental patients. We strongly recommend that you discuss any queries you may have with your dentist as each case can require a unique approach.

### Why should I use Race Dental Laboratory?

Race Dental Laboratory is a family-owned business which has been operating since 1937. Our expertise has been handed down three generations and passed on to our expert technicians via training and mentoring. Race Dental Laboratory is up-to-date with the latest technologies. Our products are made in Australia using only materials which have been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

### What are my tooth replacement options?

When a situation arises that you need a single or multiple teeth replaced or restored, as a patient there are many options.

#### **Make sure you consider the following:**

- \* How much will it cost?
- \* Will it be comfortable to use?
- \* What effect will it have on my everyday lifestyle (eating, sleeping, talking etc)?
- \* Will my teeth look completely natural?
- \* What sort of maintenance is required?
- \* How long will the procedure take?

A restoration may involve a dental crown – a material which covers over and encases the natural tooth and is designed to look like a real tooth. Dentists use crowns when rebuilding broken or decayed teeth or to improve the cosmetic appearance of a tooth. Crowns are made in a dental laboratory by a dental technician who uses moulds of your teeth made by your dentist. The type of crown your dentist recommends will depend on the tooth involved and your preference. Materials available include porcelain bonded to metal, gold alloy and metal-free zirconia.

Depending on your situation, a bridge may be required. A bridge is an appliance permanently fixed in the mouth to replace missing teeth. It uses remaining teeth to support the new artificial tooth or teeth. In order to fix the replacement tooth (known as a pontic) in place, two crowns are placed on the teeth on either side of the gap (these are called the abutment teeth.)

Other options are also available depending on your situation, including implants and partial or full dentures. It is best to discuss these concerns with your dentist and make a decision based around your individual situation.

## What causes snoring and how can I prevent it?

Snoring and Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) are breathing disorders, which occur during sleep, due to the narrowing or total closure of the airway.

Snoring is a noise created by the partial blocking of the airway. When you fall asleep the soft tissue at the back of your throat can sag, narrowing the airway. Incoming air then makes the tissue at the rear roof of the mouth (the soft palate), the flap of skin hanging from the palate (uvula) and the throat vibrate – a sound we know as snoring.

Obstructive Sleep Apnoea occurs when the airway becomes completely blocked and breathing stops temporarily. The brain then detects the lack of oxygen and prompts the patient to wake up momentarily to draw breath. Although OSA sufferers may experience hundreds of apnea episodes per night, they are unlikely to remember any of them.

Race Dental Laboratory provides your dentist with several options to assist in the relief of snoring and OSA, including splints and the MDSA appliance. Please consult your dentist to find out whether these products are right for you.

## What can be done to prevent tooth grinding?

Tooth grinding, often accompanied by the clenching of the jaw, is known in dentistry as Bruxism (from the Greek 'brugmós', gnashing of teeth). Bruxism is an oral activity that occurs in most humans at some time in their lives. In most people, bruxism is mild enough not to be a health problem. While bruxism may be a day or nighttime activity, it is bruxism during sleep which causes the majority of health issues. It can lead to wear and fractures of teeth, muscle pain and other surprising symptoms.

- \* Common symptoms of bruxism include: Headaches
- \* Jaw, neck, shoulder and back pain
- \* Tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- \* Poor sleep
- \* Earache and sinus pain
- \* Wearing and fracturing of teeth

To assist with the relief of bruxism and its symptoms, we strongly suggest that you discuss the usage of a splint with your dentist. Splints are devices which fit comfortably into the mouth to prevent tooth grinding. They can be worn during the day or night and are long lasting. Splints are available in a variety of types and materials. Visit your dentist to discuss what type of Race Dental Laboratory splint will meet your needs. [Back to Top](#)

## Are mouthguards necessary for sport?

Sport, leisure and recreation activities are the most common cause of dental injuries. A blow to the mouth or lower jaw can cause damage to the teeth and gums or result in concussion.

The Australian Dental Association recommends that anyone who participates in a sport that carries a risk of contact to the face should wear a mouthguard. This includes sports such as football, boxing or rugby and also collision sports including basketball, hockey, netball, softball and soccer.

The cheaper type of mouth guard currently available is the over the counter 'boil & bite' variety. These mouthguards are made of a plastic which is softened in hot water and molded by placing in the mouth. These mouthguards are often ineffective and can cause discomfort and difficulties breathing and speaking.

Race Dental Laboratory offers Fortress Mouthguards - a top-quality product which is custom made and professionally fitted to ensure a high level of comfort and protection. They are comfortable to wear and have good retention and fit, causing minimal interference to speaking and breathing even under demanding conditions. Fortress mouthguards are available in a light, medium or heavy size depending on your requirements.

To obtain a custom-fitted Fortress mouthguard, request a fitting with your dentist. [Click here](#) for more information about Fortress mouthguards. [Back to Top](#)

## What is the best way to whiten my teeth?

Tooth discolouration can be caused by coffee, smoking, red wine and ageing.

In accordance with Australian Dental Association guidelines, Race Dental Laboratory recommends that tooth whitening be undertaken only under the supervision of a dentist. Professional whitening can improve the colour of your teeth, and generally involves a take-home kit which allows you to treat them for a short time each day.

We sell and recommend the Colgate Visible White professional whitening system. Developed by scientists and whitening experts, the system is clinically proven to deliver fast and effective whitening. Colgate Visible White removes both surface and embedded teeth stains. It is formulated to prevent dehydration of the teeth and it has a neutral pH. Colgate Visible White provides visibly whiter teeth in only 3 days but can be used for up to 10 days. Your dentist will create a customised tray that fits comfortably in your mouth and allows you to whiten every tooth. Please see your dentist for more information about using the system.

## How do dentures work?

Dentures are replacements for missing teeth that can be taken out and put back into your mouth. While dentures take some getting used to, and will never feel exactly the same as one's natural teeth, today's dentures are natural looking and more comfortable than ever. There are two main types of dentures: full and partial. Your dentist will help you choose the type of denture that is best for you, based on whether some or all of your teeth are going to be replaced and the cost involved.

Dentures are custom-made by Race Dental Laboratory from impressions taken of your mouth. Your dentist will determine which type of denture described below is best for you:

- \* Conventional Full Denture – this is a full upper and lower set of teeth which is placed in your mouth after any remaining teeth are removed and tissues have healed. A flesh-colored acrylic base fits over your gums. The base of the upper denture covers the palate (the roof of your mouth), while that of the lower denture is shaped like a horseshoe to accommodate your tongue.

- \* Immediate Full Denture – these are a full denture which is inserted immediately after the remaining teeth are removed. While immediate dentures offer the benefit of never having to be without your teeth, they must be relined several months after being inserted because the bone supporting the teeth reshapes as it heals, causing the denture to become loose.

- \* Traditional Partial Denture – a partial denture rests on a metal framework that attaches to your natural teeth. Sometimes crowns are placed on some of your natural teeth and serve as anchors for the denture.

- \* Flexible Partial Denture - Race Dental Laboratory uses the innovative Valplast Flexible Partial which allows the restoration to adapt to the constant movement and flexibility in your mouth

\* Overdentures and hybrid Dentures – these may be full or partial and can be permanently attached or removable depending on what is suitable for your situation. Your dentist can advise you of the best solution for your mouth.

**How Long Before I Get Used to My Dentures?** New dentures may feel awkward or uncomfortable for the first few weeks or even months. If you experience irritation, see your dentist.

**How Long do Dentures Last?** Over a period of time, your denture will need to be relined, remade, or rebased due to normal wear or changes in your mouth over time. These changes cause your dentures to loosen, making chewing difficult and irritating your gums. It is important to see your dentist annually to check whether adjustments are required.

#### **Caring for dentures:**

\* When handling your dentures, stand over a folded towel or basin of water. Dentures are delicate and may break if dropped.

\* Don't let your dentures dry out. Place them in a denture cleanser soaking solution or in plain water when you're not wearing them. Never use hot water, which can cause them to warp.

\* Brushing your dentures daily will remove food deposits and plaque, and help prevent them from becoming stained. An ultrasonic cleaner may be used to care for your dentures, but it does not replace a thorough daily brushing.

\* Brush your gums, tongue and palate every morning with a soft-bristled brush before you insert your dentures. This stimulates circulation in your tissues and helps remove plaque.

\* Consult your dentist immediately if your dentures break, chip, crack or become loose.

#### **Are dental implants right for me?**

Dental implants can be an option for oral rehabilitation whether you are missing one tooth or many. Implants are a reliable alternative to dentures and offer excellent look and function. A dental implant is the closest thing to a natural tooth your dentist can give you. They feel much more natural and secure than traditional removable dentures. If several adjacent teeth are missing, a fixed bridge may be attached to dental implants as an alternative to a removable partial denture.

A dental implant can be thought of as an artificial tooth root that is submerged into the jawbone. It is fabricated from a very strong, biocompatible material and placed into the bone of the gum in a simple procedure that is generally only about as complicated as a tooth extraction. After an initial healing period, the implant is connected to a small metal post that supports an artificial tooth or set of teeth. The implant will eventually bond to the bone it is placed in, a process known as 'osseointegration.' This makes the implant very strong.

Your dentist will be happy to discuss implant options with you.