

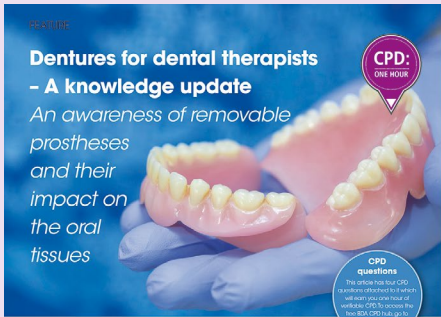
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Article: Dentures for dental therapists - A knowledge update



Dentures for dental therapists - A knowledge update
An awareness of removable prostheses and their impact on the oral tissues

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Abstract
The provision and maintenance of removable prostheses, namely partial and complete dentures, falls within the scope of practice of a general dental practitioner (GDP). Typically, dentures are used to restore function to edentulous or partially edentulous patients. Dental therapists (DTs) are likely to have these dentures waiting patients on both a dental prescription and in direct access. Having a basic knowledge of the denture-making process, common complications and presentation of the denture issues in terms of the hard and soft tissues, is valuable in ensuring appropriate follow-up with a GDP is made and made if required.

Objective statement
The reader should appreciate how their approach to soft tissue examination, caries management, non-surgical periodontal therapy and prevention, oral hygiene and/or dental photography can be modified and used in the denture-wearing patient, all while working within their scope of practice, skills set and confidence and competence.

Introduction
The provision and maintenance of removable prostheses, namely partial and complete dentures, falls within the scope of practice of a general dental practitioner (GDP). However, dental therapists (DTs) are likely to have these dentures waiting patients on both a dental prescription and in direct access. Having a basic knowledge of the denture-making process, common complications and presentation of the denture issues in terms of the hard and soft tissues, is valuable in ensuring appropriate follow-up with a GDP is made and made if required.

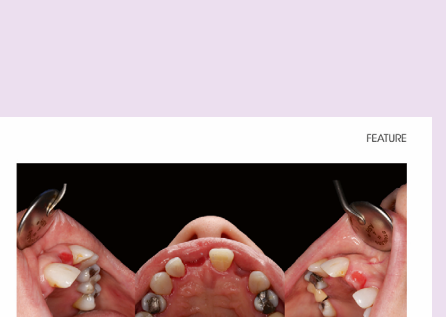
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Clinical relevance statement
DTs are likely to have denture-wearing patients on both a dental prescription and in direct access. Having a basic knowledge

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1. Which of these skills/competencies is NOT within a dental therapist's scope of practice according to the GDC?

- A. take impressions
- B. identify anatomical features, recognise abnormalities and interpret common pathology
- C. the adjustment and repair of dentures
- D. take intra and extra-oral photographs

2. Which of the following is NOT a common sign or symptom of Denture-Induced Stomatitis (DIS)?

- A. bleeding of the palate
- B. erythema (redness) of the palate

C. the outline of the DIS follows the shape of the upper denture

- D. poor denture hygiene, eg worn by the patient at night

3. Which of the following is a potential impact of long-term denture wear?

- A. decreased mobility of abutment teeth
- B. reduced periodontal and caries risk
- C. increased plaque accumulation around abutment teeth
- D. decreased risk of drug-induced gingival overgrowth

4. A denture patient presents with exposed root surfaces/clinical attachment loss around an abutment tooth. What may a GDP-DT consider in reducing this patient's caries risk?

- A. increased recall interval
- B. regular topical fluoride application +/- NaF prescription
- C. referral to GDP for extraction or root canal treatment of the affected abutment teeth
- D. antibiotic prescription