

# How to care for your denture

A denture helps you chew, improves your speech, and supports your facial muscles. In return, it requires TLC:

- › Brush your gums, tongue and palate every morning before you put in your denture.
- › Remove and brush your denture daily with a denture cleanser or paste, using a soft-bristled toothbrush or denture brush, to remove food deposits and plaque.
- › Avoid cleaning your denture in boiling water or dishwasher. It could warp.
- › Remove your denture at night. This gives tissue a rest and normal cleansing by the tongue and saliva, promoting oral health.
- › Soak in a denture cleanser or water when not wearing so your denture doesn't dry out and lose its shape.
- › If you have a partial denture, remove it before brushing your natural teeth.
- › Leave denture adjustments and repairs to the experts.

**As always, follow your dentist's instructions on wearing and care, and continue your regular dental checkups to make sure your denture continues to fit properly.**

A quarterly brush up on your HumanaDental benefits

# BRUSH

# UP



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## QA What's considered cosmetic dentistry under my plan?

Benefits are not available for services provided by dentists solely to improve appearance.

**Examples:** teeth whitening; replacement of congenitally missing teeth; and crowns and veneers on badly stained, discolored or malformed teeth.

Note: Benefits are subject to deductibles, annual maximum benefits, and frequency limits, based on plan provisions, that may impact your share of the cost. See your group benefit plan document for details.

## Oral piercings pose risks to oral health

Piercing your tongue or lips to adorn with jewelry may be trendy, but it also may place you at higher risk for recessed gums, loose teeth and even tooth loss.

### Other possible side effects, according to the American Dental Association:

- › Pierced blood vessel or artery.
- › Chipped or fractured teeth and restorations from contact with jewelry.
- › Inflammation or nerve damage at the piercing site.
- › Formation of scar tissue.
- › Airway obstruction from tongue swelling.
- › Increased saliva production, causing difficulty in chewing, swallowing and/or speaking clearly.

If you want to go ahead with the procedure, be sure you do your homework before selecting a studio, take care of your piercing while it's healing, and watch for warning signs. See your dentist immediately if you have any concerns.

### Caution extends to dental grills

Removable decorative grills, which snap over teeth, can irritate gum tissue and cause infection because of trapped food and other debris. The acids produced can result in tooth decay, chipped teeth, shifting teeth, and wear and tear on enamel. Limit wearing time, and be vigilant about brushing and flossing.



## Eight ways to relieve a dry mouth

**If you have dry mouth, you know how uncomfortable it can be—and it can lead to serious oral health problems. Here are some self-care steps to get relief:**

1. Sip water or sugarless drinks often.
2. Avoid drinks with caffeine, which can dry out the mouth.
3. Sip water or a sugarless drink during meals to make chewing and swallowing easier.
4. Chew sugarless gum or suck on sugarless hard candy to stimulate saliva flow.
5. Avoid tobacco or alcohol, which also dry out of the mouth.
6. Be aware that spicy or salty foods may cause pain in a dry mouth.
7. Use a humidifier at night.
8. Take good care of your teeth and gums to minimize decay and gum disease.

**If you have dry mouth all or most of the time, see your dentist or physician to find out the cause.**

Source: National Institutes of Health