

Questions

If you have any other questions that have not been answered by this leaflet, please ask the doctor when you next attend an appointment.

Contact details

Oral and Maxillofacial Department
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Telephone: Lister Department, Stevenage ☎ 01438 284060
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Monday to Thursday, 8.30am - 5pm
and Friday, 8.30am - 1pm.

Out of these working hours please contact:
Luton and Dunstable Hospital out of hours service ☎ **01582 491166**
and **ask for the maxillofacial doctor on call.**

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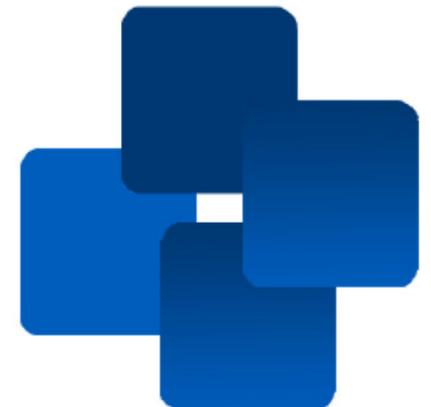
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Patient Information

Bridges

Oral and Maxillofacial Department



The purpose of this leaflet is to answer any questions you may have about bridge restorations.

What is a bridge?

A bridge is a fixed replacement for a missing tooth. It uses one or more of your teeth as an anchor adjacent to the gap. It is made in a dental laboratory and consists of **retainers**, which are like crowns on your own teeth, and **pontics**, which are false crowns to replace your missing tooth/teeth.



Why should I replace missing teeth?

There are several reasons to replace a missing tooth, including:

- For appearance purposes;
- A gap in the teeth may cause greater strain on the teeth either side;
- A gap in the teeth may affect your bite;
- If left, the teeth either side of a gap may lean/tilt into it;
- A gap in the teeth can lead to food packing which, if not cleaned well, may lead to decay.

Are there any alternatives to having a bridge?

Alternatives to having a bridge include a partial denture, implants or simply leaving the gap as it is. As listed above, there can be implications of leaving a gap as it is.

If you would like any further information on partial dentures or implants, please speak to your own dentist or the specialist.

What are bridges made of?

Bridges are made of either a precious metal with a ceramic outer layer or all ceramic.

What should I expect from my bridge preparation and fitting appointments?

Local anaesthetic will be used so no pain should be felt during the procedure. The teeth being used to anchor the bridge will be prepared using a dental drill. Once the specialist has completed this preparation, impressions will be taken in a special material.

These impressions will be sent to the dental laboratory and used to make your permanent bridge. A temporary bridge may be fitted.

The bridge will take a few weeks to make. You will be asked to make a further appointment with the receptionist to come back to have your permanent bridge fitted.

At your fit appointment, your temporary bridge will be removed. The fit and appearance of your permanent bridge will be checked, and when both you and the specialist are happy, the bridge will be fitted using a special dental adhesive.

How long will the treatment take?

You should be prepared to be in the dental chair for an extended amount of time for your bridge preparation. Then there will be a wait of many weeks between the preparation and fit appointments due to the time it takes for the bridge to be made.

How do I look after my bridge?

Maintaining good oral hygiene is very important whether you have a bridge restoration or not. However, once a bridge is fitted it is very important to maintain the 'abutment' teeth (teeth supporting the bridge) to prevent failure of the restoration.

Special flosses can be obtained from your local supermarket which are made specifically for bridges. These flosses are made to enable you to pass them underneath the pontic (false tooth) part of the bridge.

It is important to brush twice daily as usual and floss all your other teeth in your normal way.