

## Why Did the Denture Break Down the Middle?

Denture Center Line Breakage - F. Spiva Jr. CDT, MDT, CD

There is of course no question about why a denture breaks when it's dropped on the floor or in an empty sink, even though 99% of the time a new denture wearer is instructed to always slightly fill a sink with water to cushion a dropped denture while holding it over the sink to brush and clean.

When a denture breaks right through the middle, or if you will, the center, from front to back if it's an upper and between the center two front teeth if it's a lower, nine times out of ten the denture is no longer properly fitting the gum tissue.

When the gums change in size and shape due to healing from extraction's or just aging, those changes create an imbalance and that creates stress pressures along the lines in which the denture tends to fit close to the gums.

Example: The upper teeth have been extracted and a period of healing has taken place. We know that while healing after an extraction the gums, both tissue and bone, undergo changes in both size and shape shrinking if you will. When that occurs on the upper gums it's the gum ridge that changes, not the roof.

When the outside ridge heals and shrinks away from the inside of the denture the only area left that the upper denture still fits is the palate. When you chew your sending unbalanced stress pressure right down the center of the roof of the denture, front to back. You might say that it's like a playground teeter totter, it's only supported in the middle and if you put enough weight (stress pressure) at each end over and over, eventually it will break in half at the center point where the pressure is strongest. While a denture may seem to be made of a rigid hard material (and we use one of the strongest acrylics available Lucitone 199), it will bend ever so slightly when excessive pressures are applied and if those pressures are unbalanced something has to give.

If the lower gums have changed, for whatever reason, the lower denture will usually always begin to split between the two front center teeth and over time the denture will beak in half. *You can have the broken denture repaired but unless you deal with why it broke, they will break again and there is no time table for that to happen, it could happen in a few days or a few weeks, but unfortunately it will happen again.*

### **So what steps do you take to attempt to keep the dentures from breaking again?**

You have two options. Replace or Reline. If the dentures are over six years old, it's probably time to have them replaced. Or you can have the dentures refitted by "Relining" them, the denture will once again fit all the gum tissues in a balanced fit and that will take away the undue stress pressure points.

Now, let us give you additional information that we have come across. If the patient has made a practice of soaking their dentures in a strong solution of bleach over a long period of months or years, you need to know that many types of denture materials used to create dentures can be weakened by the bleach. When some denture materials are subjected to strong bleach, the material eventually gets soft like slow rotted wood. Denture material in this state may appear to have accepted the repair material and made a bond, but the fact is, the connecting point between the old material and the new will be a weak point subject to breaking more easily than the good repair material.

**As always if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us to discuss any case:  
1.234.678.5340 or toll-free 1.877.622.3533**

**Mabel Dental Lab**

**Warranty Information: Fracture repairs are NOT guaranteed and the denture after breaking once could break again at any time.**