



## Dental Prostheses and Their Effect on Oral Hygiene and Periodontal Health

<sup>1</sup>Nasser Munaji Nasser Alrashdi, <sup>2</sup>Abdulaziz Ali Mohammed, <sup>3</sup>Alzubaidi, <sup>4</sup>Ahmed Ali Mansour Aljaafari, <sup>5</sup>Ali Yaseen Abdullah Alsahhari, <sup>6</sup>Hassan Darwish Abdullah Alzubaidi, <sup>7</sup>Abdulrahman Moraya A Asiri, <sup>8</sup>Ali Saad N Alqahtani

<sup>1</sup>Dental Technologist

<sup>2</sup>Dental hygienist.

<sup>3</sup>Dental hygienist

<sup>4</sup>Dental hygiene

Specialist

<sup>5</sup>Technician-Dental Technology

<sup>6</sup>Technician Dental Technology

<sup>7</sup>Dental Technologist

### Abstract

Dental prostheses—whether fixed or removable—play an essential role in rehabilitating missing teeth and restoring oral function and aesthetics. However, their presence may influence oral hygiene practices and periodontal health. This paper analyzes current evidence on how dental prosthetic appliances affect periodontal tissues and oral hygiene, while highlighting the importance of patient education and maintenance to minimize periodontal complications.

### 1. Introduction

Tooth loss and dental diseases significantly impact oral function, patient comfort, and quality of life. Dental prostheses—such as crowns, bridges, and dentures—are frequently used to restore structure and masticatory function. Despite their clinical benefits, prosthetic devices can affect gingival tissues and periodontal health by creating areas prone to plaque accumulation and bacterial biofilms. Understanding this impact is crucial to achieving favorable long-term outcomes in prosthetic dentistry.

### 2. Types of Dental Prostheses and Periodontal Considerations

Dental prostheses can be broadly classified into:

- Fixed Prostheses (e.g., crowns, fixed bridges)
- Removable Prostheses (e.g., complete or partial dentures)

Both types can inadvertently create niches where plaque and bacteria accumulate if oral hygiene is inadequate. Prosthetic margins placed near the gingival sulcus, or improperly fitting dentures, may encourage biofilm buildup that predisposes periodontal tissues to inflammation and disease.



### **3. Mechanisms Linking Prostheses with Oral Hygiene Challenges**

#### **A. Plaque Accumulation and Gingival Inflammation**

Fixed and removable dental prostheses often come into close contact with gingival tissues. If prosthetic margins are not optimally positioned or if patients fail to clean effectively around them, bacterial plaque can accumulate. This biofilm is a primary etiological factor for gingivitis and periodontitis, potentially leading to gingival bleeding, increased pocket depths, and attachment loss.

#### **B. Influence on Periodontal Parameters**

According to recent clinical data, placement of fixed prostheses has been associated with increased clinical attachment loss over time, indicating that prosthesis-abutment interfaces can compromise periodontal support without adequate maintenance.

Additionally, removable prostheses can contribute to inflammation due to mechanical irritation and insufficient cleaning by patients.

### **4. Clinical Evidence on Prostheses and Periodontal Health**

A recent retro-prospective comparative study found that both fixed and removable dental prostheses were associated with increased plaque accumulation and clinical attachment loss in abutment teeth, particularly for fixed bridges. These findings highlight the need for close monitoring and periodontal maintenance after prosthesis placement.

Another regional cross-sectional study in Saudi Arabia demonstrated significantly higher plaque indices and gingival inflammation in users of fixed and removable partial dentures, largely attributable to suboptimal oral hygiene practices.

Collectively, these data underscore that while prostheses restore function and aesthetics, they also present potential periodontal risks without proper hygiene and professional follow-up.

### **5. Oral Hygiene Practices and Prosthetic Maintenance**

Optimal oral hygiene is fundamental to reducing plaque buildup around prosthetic devices. Patients must be educated about effective brushing, interdental cleaning, and the use of prosthesis-specific hygiene tools (e.g., interdental brushes, water flossers). Regular professional cleaning and periodontal check-ups are essential to detect early signs of inflammation or periodontal breakdown.

A 2020 study revealed that nearly half of patients with fixed dental prostheses lacked adequate instructions on oral hygiene measures, contributing to persistent plaque accumulation and periodontal concerns.

### **6. Preventive Strategies**

To optimize periodontal outcomes in prosthetic patients:

1. Pre-prosthetic periodontal screening should ensure existing periodontal disease is controlled before prosthesis placement.
2. Prosthesis design must consider hygiene access and minimize plaque niches.



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3. Patient education and motivation must emphasize meticulous cleaning around margins and prosthetic interfaces.
4. Routine professional evaluations should assess periodontal health and prosthesis integrity.

## **7. Conclusion**

Dental prostheses have a significant impact on oral hygiene and periodontal health. Although they are indispensable for functional and aesthetic rehabilitation, their presence may increase the risk of plaque accumulation and gingival inflammation, particularly if patients lack proper hygiene practices and follow-up care. Integration of patient education, regular periodontal maintenance, and careful prosthetic planning is essential to mitigate these risks and preserve long-term periodontal health.

## **References**

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