

#DM2002-18

“HISTORY OF FALSE TEETH”

FALSE TEETH, OR DENTURES, HAVE BEEN AROUND LONGER THAN YOU MAY THINK. BY 700 B.C., FALSE TEETH WERE BEING MADE FROM IVORY AND BONE.

BY THE 18TH CENTURY, FALSE TEETH WERE HAND-CARVED AND HELD INTO PLACE BY SILK THREADS. PEOPLE WEARING FULL SETS OF UPPER AND LOWER DENTURES HAD TO REMOVE THE DENTURES IN ORDER TO EAT.

LATER, POORLY FITTING PLATES WERE HELD TOGETHER BY STEEL SPRINGS, WHICH OFTEN POPPED OUT OF THE PERSON'S MOUTH! EVEN GEORGE WASHINGTON WORE POORLY FITTING DENTURES. IVORY, GOLD, SILVER, AND MOTHER OF PEARL WERE POPULAR MATERIALS.

AROUND THE YEAR 1745, THE 1ST PLASTER MODELS TO CREATE DENTURES WERE MADE. BY 1820, THE 1ST PORCELAIN DENTURES WERE CREATED. THESE FALSE TEETH WERE MORE COMFORTABLE, BUT VERY HEAVY.

WITH TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY, PATIENTS WEARING CERAMIC OR PLASTIC DENTURES ENJOY MUCH MORE COMFORT THAN DENTURES WEARERS OF THE PAST.

FOR THE ADA DENTAL MINUTE, I'M DR. MARIA LOPEZ HOWELL.