




## ORAL HEALTH, NUTRITION IN OLDER ADULTS



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MEALS ON WHEELS AMERICA

2018 MEALS ON WHEELS ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPO

# Overview

More Than a Meal: An Integrated Approach | Nutrition

Oral Health in the Media

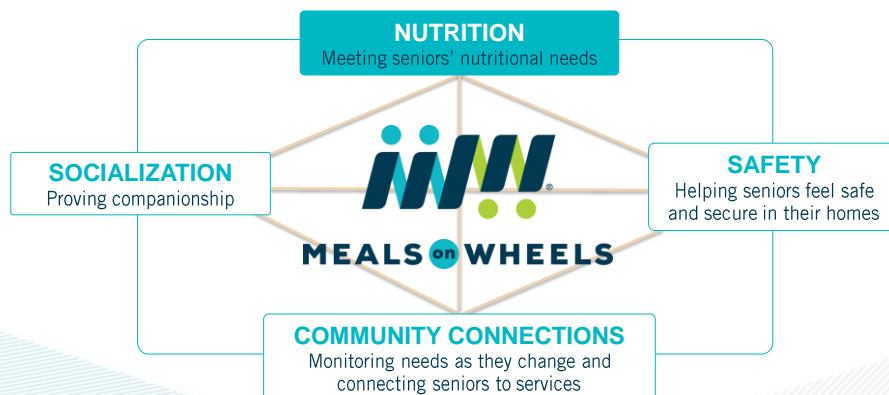
Relationship Between Oral Health And Nutrition

Facts And Figures on Oral Health

Hot Topics in Oral Health

What Can You Do?

## AN INTEGRATED APPROACH



# ORAL HEALTH IN THE MEDIA

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN GET THE MEDIA

THE FUTURE OF  
**ORAL HEALTH**

EPISODE 4: ORAL HEALTH

**Healthy Mouths,  
Healthy Lives**

HOW SMARTER TOOTHBRUSHES ARE HELPING PEOPLE  
MAINTAIN SPARKLING SMILES

**TheUpshot**

*How Dental Inequality Hurts Americans*  
Lack of dental care through Medicaid not only harms people's health,  
but has negative economic implications as well.

By Austin Frakt

Feb. 19, 2018

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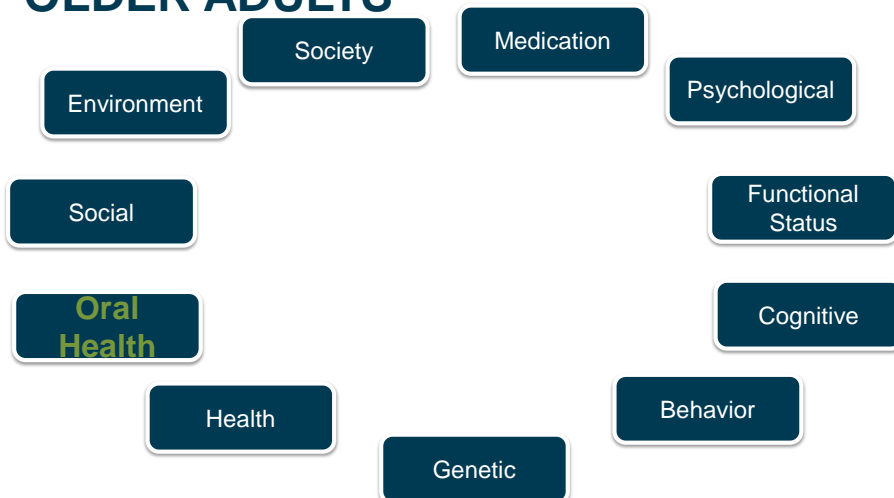
# ORAL HEALTH IN OLDER ADULTS

- Lack of access to dental care for all ages remains a public health challenge.
- There is significant attention to the oral health crises in younger populations however older adults are also greatly at risk.
- Oral health status plays a key factor in an individual's ability to consume an adequately varied diet comprised of age-appropriate nutrient dense foods, and in turn aging successfully.
- Poor oral health, however, is significantly associated with reduced dietary intake, limited diet quality and in turn, greater risk of poor nutrition.

## ORAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- Older adults need access to appropriate, affordable, and accessible food in order to achieve and maintain quality of life.
- Nutrition is more than just eating food – access to adequate nutrition ensures that we can lead active lives, engage with loved one, manage chronic or treat conditions, and maintain overall health and wellbeing.
- The major function of the mouth is to facilitate the ingestion and initial digestion of food so the oral health and nutrition status are linked.
- Often, we see oral health as separate from our overall health and wellbeing. More and more is now known about how essential good oral health is and the extent to which it impacts other systems of the body.

## RISKS TO NUTRITION STATUS IN OLDER ADULTS



*Hunger in older adults: challenges and opportunities for the Aging Network, 2017. Available at: [www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/research](http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/research).*

# ORAL HEALTH MYTHS

Fact or Fiction?



National Institutes of Health. Four Myths About Oral Health and Aging.  
<https://medlineplus.gov/magazine/issues/summer16/articles/summer16pg15-16.html>

## PROFILE OF ORAL HEALTH IN AMERICA

Nearly one-third of older adults have untreated tooth decay

Nearly one-third of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) have untreated cavities and have difficulty visiting the dentist

Minority older adults are less likely to visit the dentist

Cost is the main reason for not visiting the dentist more frequently

Cognitive, physical, and behavioral limitations can make it difficult for persons with I/DD to brush and floss their teeth

As Alzheimer's progresses, persons with dementia may forget how to brush their teeth

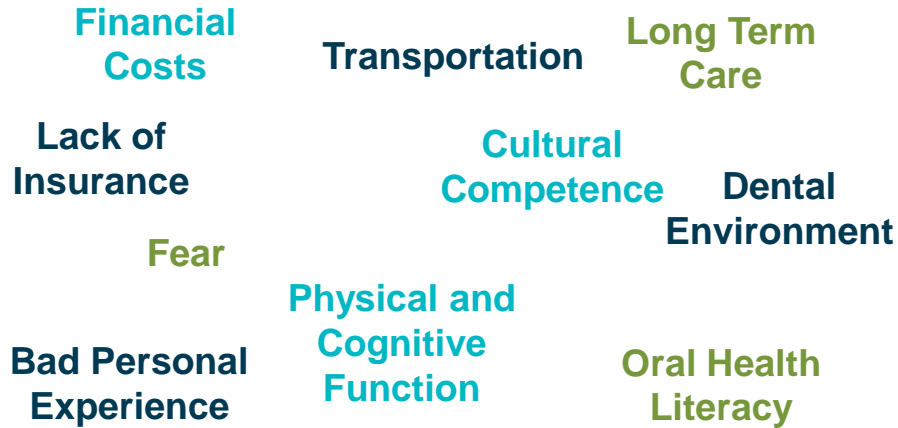
Less than half of older adults actually visited the dentist in the last year, although three-fourths said they planned to

74% of low income adults and 48% of high income adults accept that they will lose some teeth with age

Missing natural teeth is another reason seniors do not visit the dentist



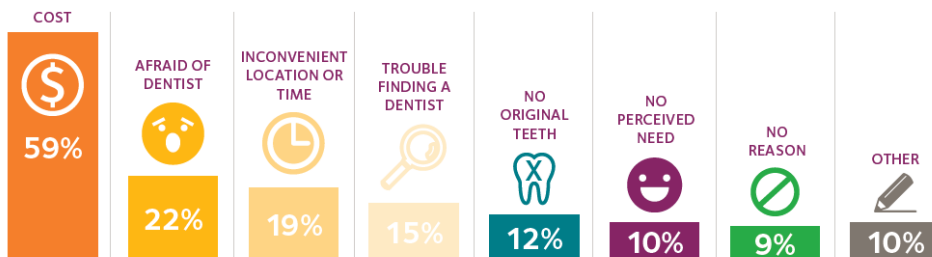
## BARRIERS TO DENTAL CARE



Gerontological Society of America, 2017. *Interprofessional Solutions for Improving Oral Health in Older America. Addressing Barriers, Creating Oral Health Champions.*

## REASONS FOR NOT VISITING THE DENTIST MORE FREQUENTLY

Among those Without a Visit in the Last 12 Months



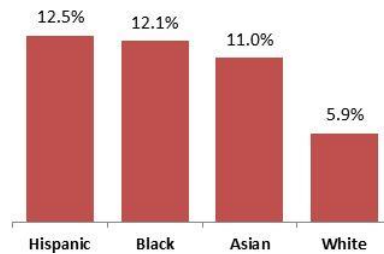
# ORAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

## ORAL HEALTH IS REALLY IMPORTANT



Health Policy Institute. American Dental Association. Oral Healthcare System in the United States. State by State Analysis. Available at: <http://www.ada.org/-/media/ADA/Science%20and%20Research/HPI/OralHealthCare-StateFacts/Oral-Health-Care-System-Full-Report.pdf>.

## Adults Age 65+ Who Could Not Afford Dental Care in the Past 12 Months, by Race



Oral Health and Wellbeing in the US. Available at: <http://www.ada.org/-/media/ADA/Science%20and%20Research/HPI/OralHealthWell-Being-StateFacts/US-Oral-Health-Well-Being.pdf?la=en>.

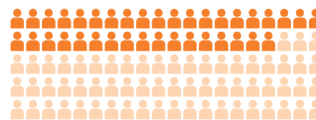
## What People Say...



**77%** of adults say they plan to visit the dentist within the next year.

Percentage who plan to visit the dentist within the next year  
(Harris, 2015)

## What People Do...



**37%** of adults actually visited the dentist within the last year.

Percentage who actually visited the dentist within the last year  
(MEPS, 2013)

%	Category	%
77%	All Adults	37%
76%	65 or older	42%
91%	Dental Benefits – Private	51%
58%	Dental Benefits – Medicaid	23%

## KEY FACTS TO REMEMBER



One-third of older adults have lost six or more teeth **33%**

Lower income older adults visit the dentist less frequently compared to their higher income counterparts

### MEANING...

- Difficulty chewing nutritious foods like fruits and vegetables
- Loss of self-confidence
- Increased risk of chronic disease such as diabetes, heart disease and gum disease

Oral Health America, 2017. *A State of Decay*, Vol. IV <https://oralhealthamerica.org/astateofdecay/>

## MOUTH-BODY CONNECTION

WHAT PROBLEMS COULD POOR DENTAL HEALTH CAUSE?



Kane, S. The effects of oral health on systemic diseases. [https://www.agd.org/docs/default-source/self.../gendnt\\_nd17\\_aafp\\_kane.pdf](https://www.agd.org/docs/default-source/self.../gendnt_nd17_aafp_kane.pdf)



# Oral microbiome

Our understanding of the microbiota within the oral cavity is advancing.

Greater awareness of the interrelationships between these organisms and the incidence of chronic disease and implications for public health and prevention.

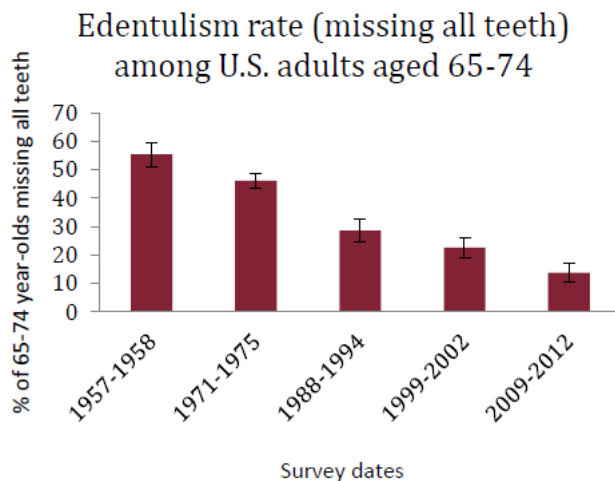
WHO recommends limiting daily intake of consumption of sugars to 25g. In 2011, the daily intake of sugars was:



Scientific American, 2016. The Future of Oral Health. Dentistry's Greatest Challenges—in Nine Infographics. Available at: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/products/the-future-of-oral-health/>.

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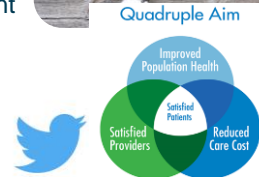
## A NEED TO FOCUS ON PREVENTION



Research America, Oral Health in Older Adults. <https://www.researchamerica.org/.../Oral%20Health%20in%20Older%20Americans.pdf>

## OPPORTUNITIES TO ADDRESS ORAL HEALTH IN OLDER ADULTS

- Greater attention to the role nutrition and oral health plays to population health management in older adults.
- Improved understanding of the health education needs of older adults, and how best to deliver culturally competent care.
- Innovative partnerships to increase collective impact to identify and address the met and unmet needs of vulnerable populations.
- Create some buzz! Leverage traditional and social media platforms to initiate a conversation and identify solutions.
- Resources and practice models abound!



## RAISE AWARENESS

- How can you keep the conversation going around the importance of oral health for those you serve?
- How are you addressing the oral health needs of the seniors your serve?
- Opportunities:
- Partners development?
- Products created?
- Programs initiated?
- Marketing and communications?
- Grants and fund seeking activities?



**Smile Proud**  
Improving Oral Health Among  
Texas Nursing Home  
Residents

## REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Administration for Community Living. Oral Health Website. <https://oralhealth.acl.gov/>

American Academy of Periodontology. Perio.org. <https://www.perio.org/>

American Dental Association. Oral Health Topics. <https://www.ada.org/en/member-center/oral-health-topics/aging-and-dental-health>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. [https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/factsheets/adult\\_oral\\_health/adult\\_older.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/publications/factsheets/adult_oral_health/adult_older.htm)

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Mouth Healthy. <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/a/aging-and-dental-health>

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Oral Health and Wellbeing in the US. Available at: <http://www.ada.org/~media/ADA/Science%20and%20Research/HPI/OralHealthWell-Being-StateFacts/US-Oral-Health-Well-Being.pdf?la=en>

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Scientific American, 2016. The Future of Oral Health. Dentistry's Greatest Challenges—in Nine Infographics. Available at: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/products/the-future-of-oral-health/>

# THANK YOU!