



Fact Sheet

Oral Health in America Advances and Challenges

A Report from the National Institutes of Health

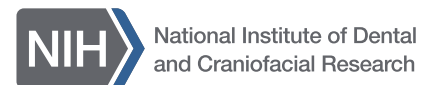
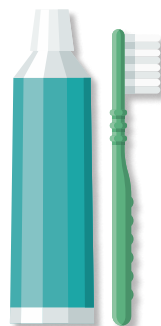
Section 3A: Oral Health Across the Lifespan: Working-age Adults

Key Summary

- Although adults now retain most of their natural teeth, many working-age adults continue to experience the same levels of tooth decay, gum disease, and oral cancers that were observed 20 years ago.
- Many working-age adults—especially low income and minority adults—don't have dental insurance.
- Nearly 1 in 5 adults experience moderate to high dental fear or anxiety, preventing some from seeking needed oral health care.
- Poor oral health during pregnancy has been linked to some adverse health outcomes for both mother and baby.
- As adults retain more of their natural teeth, and relationships between oral infection or oral inflammation continue to be identified with diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cognitive impairment, the need to prevent and control periodontitis becomes more important.
- Although there has been some improvement in 5-year survival for oropharyngeal cancers, HPV-associated oral cancers have doubled, with men having more than three times oropharyngeal cancer than women.
- Health promotion and health literacy programs can improve people's understanding of oral health and, in turn, help reduce the burden of disease and improve quality of life.

Call to Action

- Policies are needed to improve regular access to professional dental care for working-age adults, assuring access to both preventive and early treatment services, leading to better oral health.



www.nidcr.nih.gov/oralhealthinamerica

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