

# How to Brush Up on the Benefits & Get Help with Senior Dental Care

By: ShariLee Beynon  
Sharileeb@gmail.com

## **Older Americans Lack Dental Insurance**

A recent Fox News Health article pointed out that based on Medicare data, “insurance status appears to be the biggest predictor of whether a person receives oral health care.”

Millions of U.S., senior adults are not getting the dental services that they need. Elderly people tend to put off their dental care due to low incomes and a lack of insurance. Since Medicare does not cover or help with dental costs, this is a dangerous gap in health care for seniors.

Moreover, the Fox News article quotes a public health researcher and lead study author, Amber Willink, at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD as saying, “We know that older adults in the U.S. have substantial oral health problems in the way of tooth loss or untreated tooth decay, but this article really brings to light how dental insurance mitigates much of these access issues across incomes.”

“Oral health problems that develop with the lack of routine care can go well beyond just the mouth,” she added by email.

Willink also told FoxNews Health that “Particularly in the elderly, the bacteria associated with tooth decay can cause pneumonia, which is a common cause of avoidable hospital admissions and death. Our oral health directly impacts on our ability to speak, eat, and swallow. Not being able to eat can lead to nutritional deficiencies, not being able to swallow can impact one’s ability to adhere to their medication regimen required to treat other illnesses.”

## **Age and Quality of Life**

Nobody wants to live their golden years incapacitated and in pain. Dentists have gotten a bad rap over the years, but medical technology and advances in medications have changed this view.

U.S. oral health is steadily improving—yet, it seems—not for everyone. Seniors and low-income families still need attention in this area.

Health care begins in the mouth. We automatically chew and swallow most of what we put into our mouth. And we don't usually think about dental services while enjoying this process.

Instead, we may think about the taste and texture of the food we are eating, or we might consider how we feel when eating certain things. However, these pleasantries disappear when one of our teeth begins to hurt.

### **Health Care is Taught in School**

Young adults know that dental care is an important part of their health care. Most parents see to it that their children visit the dentist regularly, and today, it is all about smiles!

However, as people age and responsibilities take up more time and money, sometimes we push personal, dental care to the back burner. It can sit back there for a long time before one or more teeth begin to demand our attention.

Unfortunately, by the time we are in pain, and we realize that the expense of dental care is not in our budget--it is too late. We have no choice but to take money from some other account to solve the "painful problem."

### **Longer Life Requires Planning**

Information technology is available to us all. It is easy to go online and learn about how oral health directly impacts the health of the rest of your body. There are other available means of research as well.

The important thing is to learn about how your oral health affects the rest of your body. It may be surprising to learn that your teeth and gums can affect everything from diabetes to the health of your heart.

### **Population Data Reveals a Lot About Your Future**

By the year 2030, all of the baby boomers will officially be in the older population of the U.S. This changes the social landscape from 13 percent of seniors in 2010 to 19 percent in 2030, and 24 percent by 2050

Furthermore, by the year 2050, all of the baby boomers will be 85 years of age, or older, and at the same time--the population aged 65 or over is projected to be 83.7 million.

By 2033, the U.S. population 65 and older, will outnumber those who are 18 years of age and younger.

Those coming behind us will not be old enough to support a workforce large enough to pay for the health care needs of this many older adults.

Therefore, the time to begin taking care of your oral health care is now. And, as with other medical considerations, insurance is your protection against devastating losses.

We are dedicated to improving your health. Contact us, and choose a discount plan that works best for you.

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**By: ShariLee Beynon, [sharileeb@gmail.com](mailto:sharileeb@gmail.com)**

321-228-7001 – Please leave a message with callback information.