

— BRIDGING THE GAP —

ORAL HEALTH & DIABETES

IN VIRGINIA

Many Virginians with diabetes do not receive essential dental care. This increases their risk of preventable health complications. Medical professionals can help address this gap.

MEDICAL VS. DENTAL CARE UTILIZATION

Nearly all Virginia adults with diabetes get routine medical checkups, but many do not get the dental care they need:

90%

of Virginia adults with diabetes had a routine medical checkup in the past year, but only



65%

of Virginia adults with diabetes had a dental visit in the past year.¹

11.8%

of Virginia's adults aged 18 and older reported being diagnosed with diabetes.¹

Among older adults, the burden is higher:

1/4

Virginians aged 65 and older reported being diagnosed with diabetes.¹

THE MOUTH-BODY CONNECTION

Diabetes and oral health directly affect each other in multiple ways:²



GUM DISEASE

is more common in people with diabetes and can make blood sugar harder to control.



DRY MOUTH

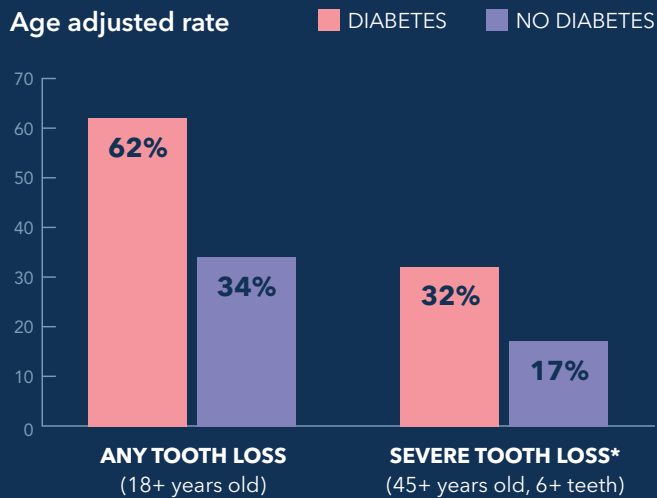
is a common side effect of diabetes that increases risk of tooth decay and oral infections.



ORAL INFECTIONS

Oral infections hinder blood glucose control, raising risks of heart and kidney disease.

TOOTH LOSS FOR ADULTS WITH DIABETES IN VIRGINIA¹



WHY IT MATTERS

Oral health issues related to diabetes are largely preventable through coordinated care that addresses both oral and overall health. Medical professionals can help by educating patients, encouraging preventive dental care, and teaming up with dentists to provide integrated, comprehensive care. This collaboration helps close care gaps, supports early detection of oral health issues, strengthen diabetes management, and ultimately improves quality of life while reducing long-term healthcare costs.^{2,3}

PARTNERING FOR PREVENTION

Addressing oral and overall health for individuals with diabetes requires a team-based approach:³

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS



Ask about patients' oral health during routine visits



Educate patients about the links between diabetes and oral health



Establish referral relationships with dental professionals

DENTAL PROFESSIONALS



Monitor for signs of diabetes-related oral health issues



Reinforce importance of blood sugar control to prevent oral complications



Coordinate with medical providers to support integrated care

INDIVIDUALS WITH DIABETES



Schedule regular dental visits (at least once a year) and inform your dentist about your diabetes



Practice good oral hygiene - brush twice daily, floss regularly - and avoid tobacco



Work with your healthcare team to manage blood sugar levels and attend recommended checkups

MORE INFORMATION

Promoting Oral Health | Diabetes | CDC
bit.ly/CDC-diabetes

Diabetes | American Dental Association
bit.ly/ADA-diabetes

Diabetes and Oral Health | NIH
bit.ly/NIDCR-diabetes

REFERENCES

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