

# Oral health and older adults

**BY THE NUMBERS** Brushing your teeth may not be the most fun part of your daily routine, but it pays off, especially as you age. Combined with regular visits to the dentist, brushing and flossing help older adults prevent tooth loss and avoid pain.

Want to find out more? The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) has information online, titled “Older Adults and Oral Health,” to help you learn the facts about oral health and growing older.

If you’re a caregiver of an older adult, NIDCR has information for you too. Take a look at NIDCR’s “Oral Health & Aging: Information for Caregivers” series. These fact sheets offer practical caregiving tips about brushing and flossing, preventing dry mouth, and visiting the dentist.

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About **96%** of adults aged 65 years or older **have had a cavity.**



**1 in 5** adults aged 65 or older have untreated tooth decay.

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About **3 in 5** adults aged 65 years or older **have gum disease.**



Cancers of the mouth are primarily found in older adults. The median age at diagnosis is **63 years.**

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**SOURCES:** National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research; National Cancer Institute; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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