Oral Health among Older Adults in Washington

- More than 38 percent of all adults in the state have had teeth removed due to tooth decay or gum disease.¹
- Nearly one-fifth of older adults – estimated to be 150,000 people in Washington – have untreated dental cavities.²
- In Washington, 20 percent of older adults have lost all of their teeth.³
- Twenty-five percent of adults 65 to 74 nationwide have severe periodontal (gum) disease. Gum disease has been linked to other serious health problems including diabetes, heart disease and strokes. ⁴
- Uncontrolled oral infection such as periodontitis will increase the risk for certain long-term complications of diabetes, kidney disease and cardiovascular disease. ⁵
- Management and treatment of periodontal disease in patients with poorly controlled diabetes may reduce insulin requirements and improve glycemic control. ⁶
- In 2007, 12 percent of Washington State’s population is over age 65. By 2030, adults 65 and older will be 20 percent of the population.⁷

Suggestions for additional reading and resources:


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³ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2001 Data Tables. (Referenced above)