Overall Condition of Mouth and Teeth

15% of low income adults say their mouth and teeth are in poor condition.

Life in General is Less Satisfying Due to Condition of Mouth and Teeth

Appearance of Mouth and Teeth Affects Ability to Interview for a Job
How Often Have You Experienced the Following Problems in the Last 12 Months Due to the Condition of Your Mouth and Teeth?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dry Mouth</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty Biting/Cheewing</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience Pain</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid Smiling</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embarrassment</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems Sleeping</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce Social Participation</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty with Speech</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty Doing Usual Activities</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Days Off</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 in 5 adults avoid smiling due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.

1 in 5 adults feel embarrassment due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.

18% of adults experience anxiety due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.
Problems Due to Condition of Mouth and Teeth, by Household Income

Low income adults are most likely to report having problems due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.

The top oral health problem for low income adults is difficulty biting and chewing.

36% of low income adults avoid smiling due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.

21% of high income adults experience pain due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.

23% of middle income adults feel embarrassment due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.

20% of low income adults reduce participation in social activities due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.
Oral Health and Well-Being in Massachusetts

Attitudes Toward Oral Health and Dental Care

- **I value keeping my mouth healthy.**
  - STRONGLY DISAGREE: 22%
  - SOMEWHAT DISAGREE: 17%
  - SOMEWHAT AGREE: 18%
  - STRONGLY AGREE: 3%

- **Regular visits to the dentist will help keep me healthy.**
  - STRONGLY DISAGREE: 77%
  - SOMEWHAT DISAGREE: 36%
  - SOMEWHAT AGREE: 26%
  - STRONGLY AGREE: 3%

- **As I grow old I accept I will lose some of my teeth.**
  - STRONGLY DISAGREE: 76%
  - SOMEWHAT DISAGREE: 36%
  - SOMEWHAT AGREE: 19%
  - STRONGLY AGREE: 4%

- **I need to see the dentist twice a year.**
  - STRONGLY DISAGREE: 77%
  - SOMEWHAT DISAGREE: 36%
  - SOMEWHAT AGREE: 21%
  - STRONGLY AGREE: 4%

- **It is easier to get ahead in life if I have straight, bright teeth.**
  - STRONGLY DISAGREE: 76%
  - SOMEWHAT DISAGREE: 36%
  - SOMEWHAT AGREE: 19%
  - STRONGLY AGREE: 4%

- **I value oral health.** 98%
- **94%** agree regular dental visits keep them healthy.
- **87%** feel they need to visit the dentist twice per year.
- **83%** believe straight, bright teeth help you get ahead in life.
- **52%** low income adults
- **56%** high income adults

“*I accept I will lose some teeth with age.*”

HPI Health Policy Institute
ADA American Dental Association
Oral Health and Well-Being in Massachusetts

Reasons for Not Visiting the Dentist More Frequently, Among Those Without a Visit in the Last 12 Months

- **COST**: 55%
- **AFRAID OF DENTIST**: 28%
- **INCONVENIENT LOCATION OR TIME**: 14%
- **TROUBLE FINDING A DENTIST**: 10%
- **NO ORIGINAL TEETH**: 22%
- **NO PERCEIVED NEED**: 7%
- **NO REASON**: 4%
- **OTHER**: 6%

Household Income

- **LOW**:
  - Cost: 48%
  - Afraid of dentist: 32%
  - Inconvenient location or time: 19%
  - Trouble finding a dentist: 10%
  - No original teeth: 11%
- **MIDDLE**:
  - Cost: 60%
  - Afraid of dentist: 33%
  - Inconvenient location or time: 21%
  - Trouble finding a dentist: 12%
  - No original teeth: 5%
- **HIGH**:
  - Cost: 55%
  - Afraid of dentist: 20%
  - Inconvenient location or time: 12%
  - Trouble finding a dentist: 3%
  - No original teeth: 9%

- 32% of low income adults cite fear as a reason not to visit the dentist.
- 33% of middle income adults cite fear as a reason not to visit the dentist.
- 20% of high income adults cite fear as a reason not to visit the dentist.