
In the fall of 2014, the NSDA asked Nova Scotians about seniors’ oral health care: how important is oral health care in their long-term plans, and what do they know about the dental health of family over the age of 65?

Polls show:
- 60% of Nova Scotians are not concerned with their parents’ (over the age of 65) oral health.
- 98% of Nova Scotians rank their own oral health as critical or very important to themselves.
- 27% of Nova Scotians don’t know how their parent (over the age of 65) feels about their own oral health.

These statistics indicate a knowledge and awareness gap between caring for your own oral health and being concerned about a family member or loved one that may no longer be able to monitor or maintain their own dental health. Nova Scotia’s dentists are concerned with the oral health of our aging provincial population. This report is their call to action.

Questions Nova Scotians Should Be Asking...

Who is going to care for my oral health? Or assist me when I cannot?

Who will provide oral care for my aging parent or loved one when they cannot care for themselves?

What will happen to their teeth and gums when they suffer from reduced dexterity, or age-related dementia?

About The NSDA

Established in 1891, the Nova Scotia Dental Association represents the province’s dentists and advocates for the oral health of all Nova Scotians.

nsdental.org

The Brushing Up on Mouth Care Program

The Brushing Up on Mouth Care Program was created to examine the integration of oral health care for frail and dependent older adults into continuing care settings in rural Nova Scotia, Canada.

This collaboration of health care researchers and providers explored the broad spectrum of influences on daily mouth care in long-term care, to assist in establishing a formal process for integrating oral care into organizational policy and practice.

Training resources for caregivers and long-term care facilities are free and available online for download:

http://www.ahprc.dal.ca/projects/oral-care/

Healthyteeth.org Plus

Healthyteeth is an award-winning student and teacher oral health care education and awareness site. Since its launch, Healthyteeth has received over 2 million site visits from all over the world.

In 2014, Healthyteeth was renovated to add new interactive features and elements, encourage questions from all over the world, AND the addition of a dedicated seniors site, Healthyteeth.org Plus.

If you can’t find the answer to what you’re looking for, get in touch with a local dentist with just 1-click of a button.

healthyteeth.org


Produced by the Nova Scotia Dental Association
Over 65 and provision of individual oral care kits to all residents (68%).

Dentists recognize the fact our senior population in long term care face an oral health crisis. For once they move in. Decades of carefully looking after their oral health are frequently abandoned. A mandatory oral health exam is taken prior to admission, and the resident’s oral condition frequently goes unaccounted for. When seniors enter into long-term or an assisted living facility (LTC), dental health records are often absent. No oral health is overlooked.

Broken or damaged teeth, abscesses, gum disease and other oral problems can lead to an inability to eat, swallow, or speak. These symptoms often go overlooked, and without proper access to care, pose a great danger. There is a misconception that what you cannot see cannot be there. Some examples include:

2. The oral health of ageing baby boomers: a comparison of adults aged 45–64 and those 65 years and older, Mary E. McNally, Debora C. Ryan, William E. O’Rourke, and J. Howard Standley  
3. Canadian Dental Association, CDA Essentials Magazine Volume 1. Issue 3  
5. NSDA Membership Survey, Seniors Access to Care Survey

Resources and statistics provided by:
2. The oral health of ageing baby boomers: a comparison of adults aged 45–64 and those 65 years and older, Mary E. McNally, Debora C. Ryan, William E. O’Rourke, and J. Howard Standley  
3. Canadian Dental Association, CDA Essentials Magazine Volume 1. Issue 3  
5. NSDA Membership Survey, Seniors Access to Care Survey  
6. Healthycanadians.org

Facts About Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia has a disproportionate population of aging adults.

Worldwide, the number of seniors reaching the age of 80 by 2050 is expected to quadruple to over 400 million. Canada is home to almost 5 million seniors over the age of 65, and that number is expected to surpass the number of children by 2016. Due to the aging baby boomers, and low fertility rates, this will be the first time seniors outnumber children in Canadian history.

Our aging population differs from similar seniors of the past—they have kept more of their natural teeth.

Today’s seniors and the seniors of tomorrow have the expectation of keeping their natural teeth longer than ever before. The baby boomer generation is now entering its senior years with more natural teeth than previous generations. These natural teeth require regular care.

There is a misconception that what you cannot see cannot hurt you. We need more emphasis on awareness of the particular oral health needs of our senior population. What are the problem signs? How can we prevent the specific oral issues facing seniors?

People with some form of dental insurance are more likely to access regular care.

Seniors are generally less likely to have dental insurance.