

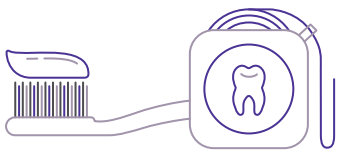


Smiling can ‘trick’ your brain into happiness, but depression and poor oral health holds many people back.

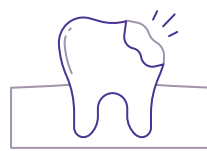
80% of all respondents said the simple act of smiling can make them feel happier – and among those who indicated they frequently experience feelings of depression or hopelessness, 78% still share

Oral health is a window to mental health. Depression often leads to poor dental hygiene which only worsens feelings of despair.

The link between oral and mental health is striking for older Americans



More than **1 IN 3** adults 50 and older admit they are likely to neglect brushing and flossing when feeling depressed



35% adults 50 and older say tooth pain intensifies feelings of depression or hopelessness



Adults 50 and older with symptoms of anxiety and depression often skip the dentist

27% of adults who more often experience symptoms associated with depression said they have not seen a dentist in more than two years, compared to adults who less often or never experienced symptoms of depression within the past 6 months, **42%** have seen their dentist among which **42%** in the past 1 to 6 months.



Poor dental health leaves people feeling insecure

60% of adults who more often experience symptoms associated with depression **admit they fear negative judgement for the appearance of their teeth** compared to **22%** of those who **experience infrequent or no feelings associated with depression in the past 6 months.**

“ *The link between mental health and oral health is powerful. Everyone, regardless of age, ethnicity or gender, should feel uninhibited to smile and take care of their whole selves...* ”
— Sarah Chavarria,
President of Delta Dental

Dental pain intensifies mental anguish

45% of Americans 50 and older report they are more likely to **notice changes in their mood/mental health** when experiencing dental pain or discomfort.



37% of those who frequently or sometimes experience feelings associated with **depression or hopelessness** say **oral tooth pain intensifies these feelings.**

Delta Dental of California offers comprehensive, high-quality oral health care coverage to more than 44 million of enrollees.

Learn more about the link between mental and oral health at deltadentalins.com



Based on April 2023 online survey of 1,016 adults 50 years of age and older by Atomik Research and commissioned by Delta Dental. Atomik Research is an independent, creative market research agency.