

Can good dental health help protect against cognitive decline and dementia?

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An analysis of all relevant studies published in the medical literature indicates that poor periodontal health and tooth loss may increase the risk of both cognitive decline and dementia.

The analysis, which is published in the *Journal of the American*

Geriatrics Society, included 47 studies. Poor periodontal health (reflected by having [periodontitis](#), [tooth loss](#), deep periodontal pockets, or alveolar bone loss) was associated with a 23% higher odds of cognitive decline and a 21% higher risk of [dementia](#). Tooth loss alone was linked to a 23% higher odds of cognitive decline and a 13% higher risk of dementia. The overall quality of evidence was low, however.

"From a clinical perspective, our findings emphasize the importance of monitoring and management of periodontal health in the context of dementia prevention, although available evidence is not yet sufficient to point out clear ways for early identification of at-risk individuals, and the most efficient measures to prevent cognitive deterioration," the authors wrote.

More information: "Periodontal Health, Cognitive Decline, and Dementia—A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Longitudinal Studies", *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2022). [DOI: 10.1111/jgs.17978](#)

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