

# Oral Health Status of Adults with Diabetes in Nevada: Analysis of the 2022 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

## Key findings

### Data from the 2022 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

- 7.2% of adults in NV have Type 2 diabetes
- Among those with Type 2 diabetes, 60.9% have lost one or more permanent teeth
- Among adults in NV living with Type 2 diabetes, 56% have never received diabetic education or counseling
- Adults with any type of diabetes in NV have 69% higher odds of permanent tooth loss compared to those without diabetes
- Adults with Type 2 diabetes in NV have 61% higher odds of permanent tooth loss compared to those without Type 2 diabetes
- Adults in NV who have never received diabetic education or counseling have two times higher odds of permanent tooth loss compared to those who receive education or counseling

Type 2 diabetes affects over 34.2 million U.S. adults, including 11% of adults in Nevada as of 2022. This chronic condition not only impacts blood sugar levels and quality of life, but it also has serious implications for oral health, increasing the risk of permanent tooth loss and impaired quality of life. Access to dental care and diabetes management is crucial for improving overall health and quality of life. This fact sheet highlights key findings on the oral health status of adults living with Type 2 diabetes in Nevada (NV). It also provides actionable recommendations to improve care, promote health equity, and support adults with Type 2 diabetes in NV.

## Methods

We analyzed data from the 2022 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), an annual survey collected by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to explore the oral health status of adults living with Type 2 diabetes in NV.

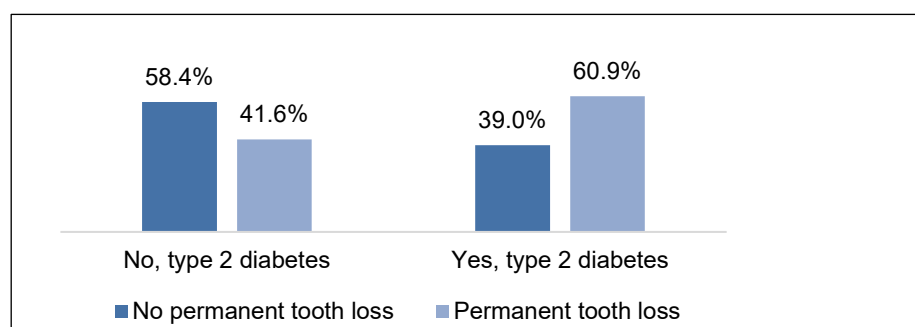
### Demographics of NV adults living with Type 2 diabetes and permanent tooth loss.

- 7.2% of adults in NV have Type 2 diabetes
- Among those with Type 2 diabetes, 60.9% have lost one or more permanent teeth
- Among adults in NV living with Type 2 diabetes, 56% have never received diabetic education or counseling

### Factors associated with having both Type 2 diabetes and permanent tooth loss.

- Adults with any type of diabetes in NV have 69% higher odds of permanent tooth loss compared to those without diabetes
- Adults with Type 2 diabetes in NV have 61% higher odds of permanent tooth loss compared to those without Type 2 diabetes [Figure A]
- Adults in NV who have never received diabetic education or counseling have two times higher odds of permanent tooth loss compared to those who receive education or counseling

**Figure A. Permanent tooth loss by diabetes status among NV adults (18+ years)**



## Implications and Recommendations

These findings underscore the importance of increasing access, availability, and affordability of oral health services to adults living with Type 2 diabetes in Nevada.

The proposed recommendations underscore two broad aims: the first, to enhance communication and patient education, and the second, to ensure sustainable health information exchange by enhancing medical-dental integration and community partnerships. We propose the following specific recommendations:

### A. Enhanced Communication and Patient Education

- Train healthcare providers to use culturally tailored, clear communication strategies to educate patients about the link between Type 2 diabetes and oral health.
- Encourage providers to ask patients about dental visits and oral health during routine diabetes checkups and refer patients to dental services.
- Develop diabetes-specific oral health education resources in English, Spanish, and other languages as needed, targeting literacy levels common in underserved populations in non-metropolitan areas.
- Encourage local/rural public health agencies to creatively address access to oral health care by utilizing a non-traditional oral health workforce, focusing on oral health disease prevention.

### B. Health Information Exchange (HIE)

- Include flags in electronic health records (EHRs) to alert providers about patients at high risk for diabetes-related oral complications.
- Use HIE data to identify non-metropolitan counties in Nevada with the greatest disparities in dental care access among adults living with Type 2 diabetes.
- Share aggregated data with local public health agencies to inform targeted outreach campaigns and resource allocation.

### C. Payment Mechanisms

- Advocate for health insurers in Nevada to include routine dental exams as part of diabetes care benefits.
- Develop payment models that bundle diabetes care with oral health services to encourage comprehensive, coordinated care.
- Increase funding for dental care subsidies or sliding fee scale programs targeted at low-income adults living with Type 2 diabetes.

## For questions, please contact:

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