

Burden of Oral Disease Among Older Adults

Implications for Public Health Priorities

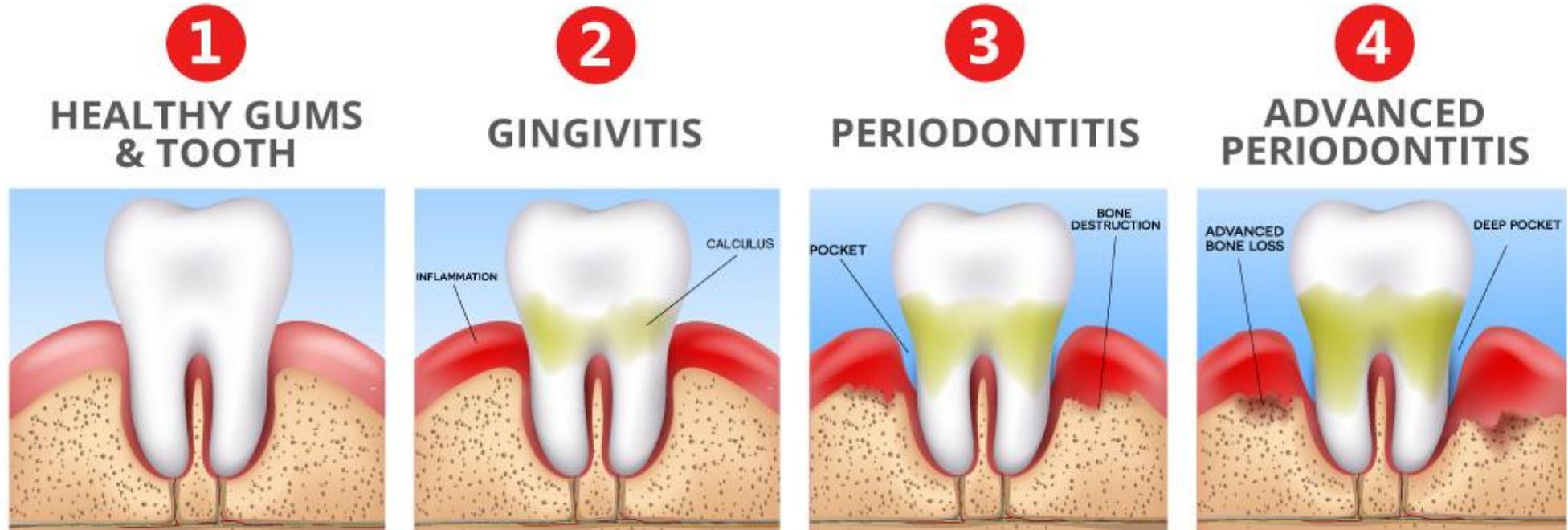
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Stages Of Gum Disease

Stages of Gum Disease



Calculus builds up on teeth and gums are inflamed (red).

Gingivitis: Calculus builds up on teeth and gums are inflamed

Inflammation causes gums to separate from tooth, forming pockets. Early to moderate bone loss.

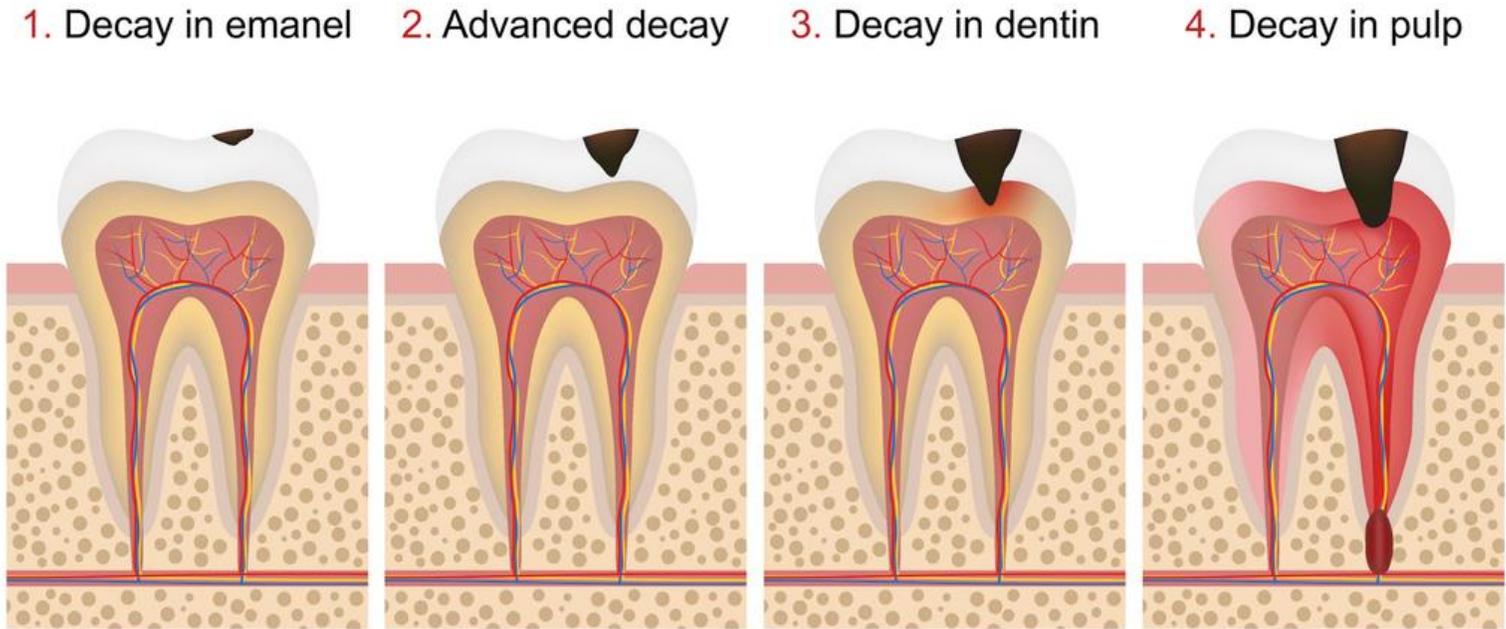
Periodontitis: Inflammation causes gums to separate from tooth, forming pockets. Early to moderate bone loss

Severe bone loss, deep pockets. Tooth is in danger of falling out.

Advanced Periodontitis: Severe bone loss, deep pockets. Tooth is in danger of falling out

The stages of tooth decay

Stages of Tooth Decay



These stages are not painful

This stage
is painful

This stage is
very painful

- Stage 1: Decay in enamel
- Stage 2: Advanced decay (first two stages are not painful)
- Stage 3: Decay in dentin (this stage is painful)
- Stage 4: Decay in pulp (this stage is very painful)

Oral Health is Important to Overall Health

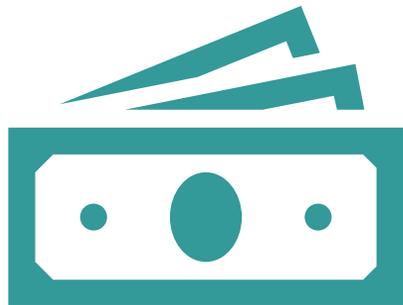
- **Stress:** Hormones produced by stress and depression may contribute to gum disease
- **Heart:** Gum disease and poor health may lead to a higher risk for heart disease and stroke
- **Lungs:** Bacteria in the mouth can be inhaled into the lungs and may lead to respiratory complications such as pneumonia
- **Kidneys:** There are links between kidney disease and oral health problems including gum disease and tooth loss
- **Bones:** Bone density tends to weaken with age, including the bones that support teeth
- **Diabetes:** Diabetic patients are more likely to have gum disease. Non-diabetic patients with poor oral health may be more susceptible to developing diabetes
- **Cancer:** Oral cancer can develop and easily spread throughout the body, so early detection is important.

Barriers to Oral Health for Older Adults

Medicare is the primary source of health coverage for older adults, but without a Medicare dental benefit, **70%** of older adults have no to very limited oral health coverage.¹ As a consequence, **one in five** older adults has untreated tooth decay² and **70%** have periodontal (gum) disease.³ Cost is the primary barrier older adults cite in obtaining dental treatment.⁴ Half of all Medicare beneficiaries have incomes below \$26,200 and have less than \$74,450 in savings, including retirement accounts.⁵

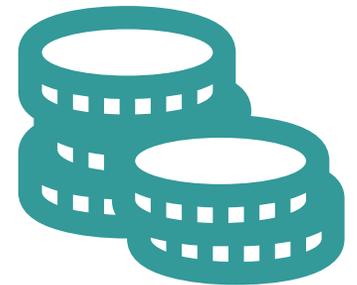
Non-traumatic Dental Condition (2006-2017)

Medicare Part A = 8243 conditions

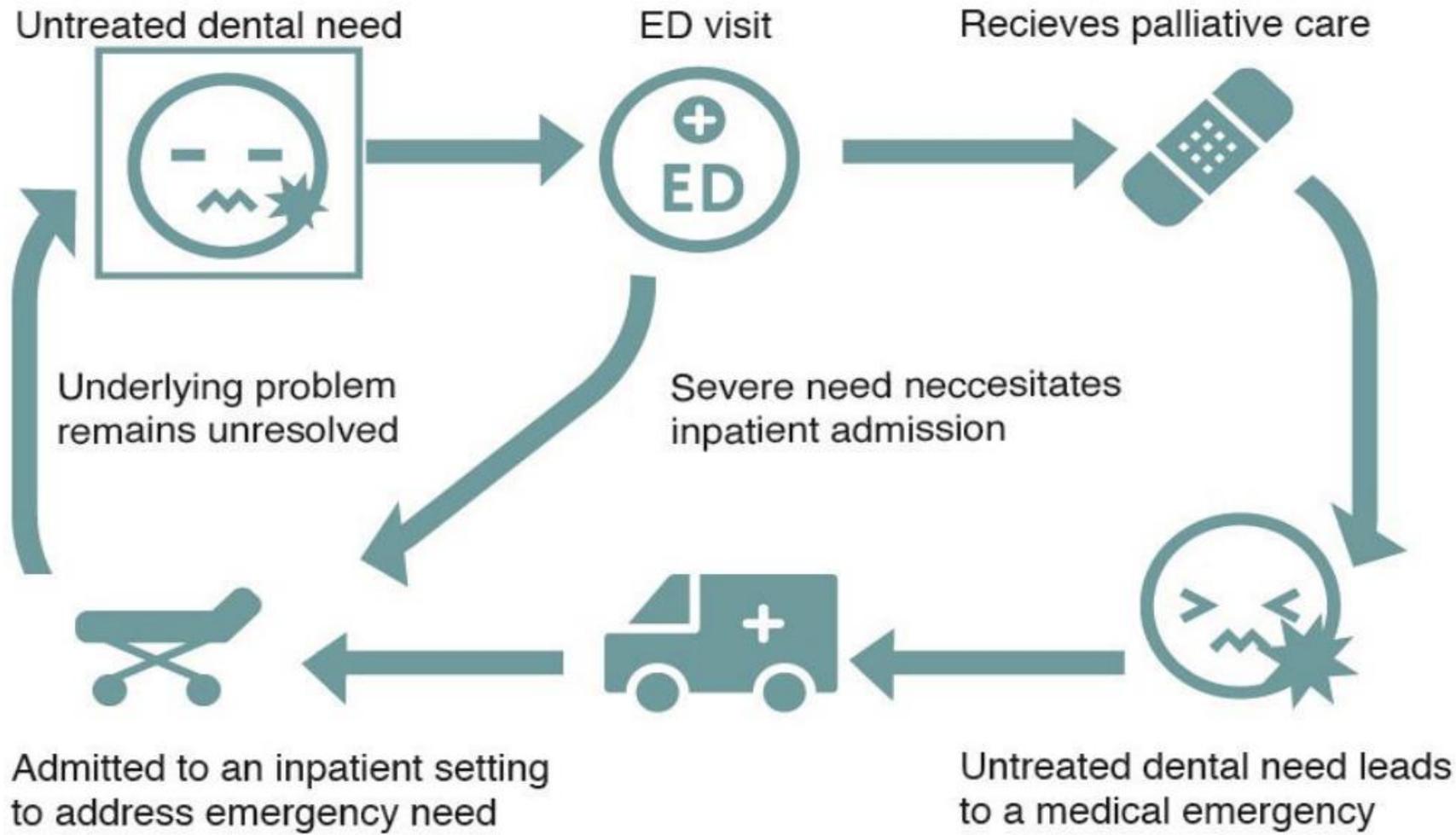


Charges

\$332,320,646.66



Cycle of Untreated Dental Needs



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**Thank
you!**

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2. Bruce A. Dye et al., “Dental caries and tooth loss in adults in the United States, 2011–2012,” NCHS Data Brief, (May 2015), available at ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25973996; and C.M. Vargas, et al., “The Oral Health of Older Americans, National Center for Health Statistics, Aging Trends,” (2001), available at cdc.gov/nchs/data/ahcd/agingtrends/03oral.pdf.
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