

RESEARCH AND NEWS

How will periodontitis impact US adults in 2050? New research from JADA highlights growing national disparity

Severe periodontitis is rising in the US, with nearly 3.9 million new cases in 2021 and more than 42 million Americans affected—yet the burden varies sharply by age, sex, and state. JADA researchers predict the future of severe periodontal disease in their new study.

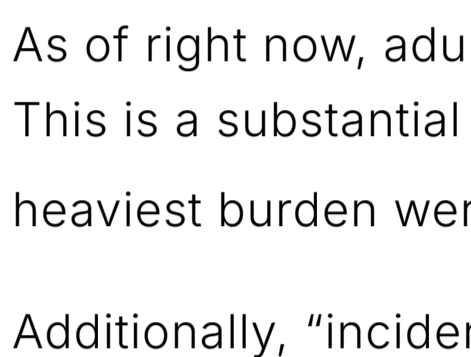
Sarah Butkovic, MA, BA • Feb. 4, 2026 • 3 min read



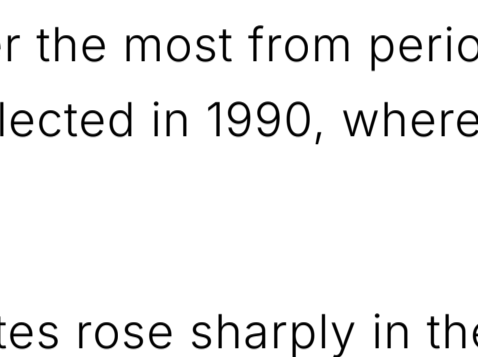
A new study published by the *Journal of American Dental Association (JADA)* details a comprehensive overview of severe periodontitis in the US, revealing who it affects the most, where it is most rampant, and what the future of care may look like by 2050.

The study used data collected from patients with severe periodontal disease from 1990 to 2021 to evaluate the current state of periodontitis in the US and project trends into the next 25 years. Age, sex, and geographic location of participants were significant factors that informed researchers' decisions.

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Study results

In 2021, the US reported 3,888,867 new cases of severe periodontitis, bringing the total prevalent cases to ~42,434,000. But this burden was not distributed evenly—in fact, it was far from it.¹

Age

As of right now, adults aged 50 to 64 suffer the most from periodontal disease. This is a substantial shift from the data collected in 1990, where those with the heaviest burden were aged 40 to 44.¹

Additionally, “incidence and prevalence rates rose sharply in the 15 through 19 years age group through the 40 through 44 years age group,” according to researchers. This demonstrates a steady increase beginning in adolescence and continuing into mid-adulthood.¹

Sex

Sex disparities were also prevalent in the study results. Researchers reported that “men exhibited a higher prevalence rate across all age groups and a higher incidence rate than women in those younger than 54 years,” while “no considerable sex differences [were] observed beyond this age.”¹

Ultimately, males carry a greater burden earlier in life but differences narrow between men and women as they age.¹

Location

The amount of people with periodontal disease ranged from state to state. New York and North Carolina showed the highest incidence levels (1,089 and 983 per 100,000 people respectively) while “Wisconsin and Iowa had the lowest (967 and 748 per 100,000 people, respectively).¹

The same goes for prevalence: New York and North Carolina reported 12,122 cases and 10,054 cases per 100,000 people respectively whereas Wisconsin and Iowa reported 6,662 and 7,395 per 100,000 people, respectively. JADA data expects both prevalence and incidence to grow nationwide by 2050.¹

Why this information matters

Overall, periodontitis—specifically severe periodontitis—is an ever-changing yet consistently significant burden in the United States.

Despite gum disease being the leading cause of tooth loss in adults, the burden of this condition and its potential for long-term damage remains understudied—more than 42% of adults 30 years and older suffer from periodontal disease and 7.8% have severe periodontitis.¹

Not only that, but the financial onus of this condition can disproportionately affect low-income patients and those in underserved communities; JADA researchers note that the indirect economic burden of periodontitis is roughly \$150.57 billion. Therefore, having a better understanding of the state of periodontitis is needed to develop targeted public health interventions and policy making.¹

JADA researchers underscored this sentiment, noting that the differences in age, sex, and geographic location “highlight the need for more targeted interventions,” and that the US must work towards “effectively allocating public health resources.”

Reference

1. Wang Y, Zhao X, Yu Y. The burden of severe periodontitis in the United States: insights from a population-based analysis. *J Am Dent Assoc.* 2025;18:S0002-8177(25)00574-4. doi:10.1016/j.adaj.2025.09.015

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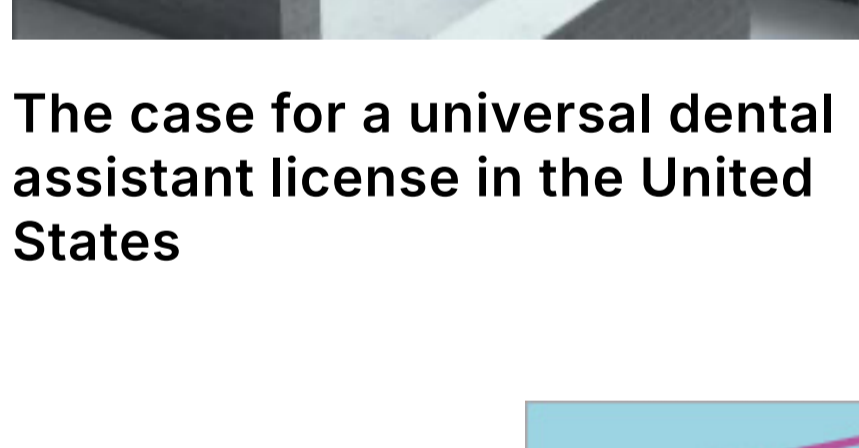
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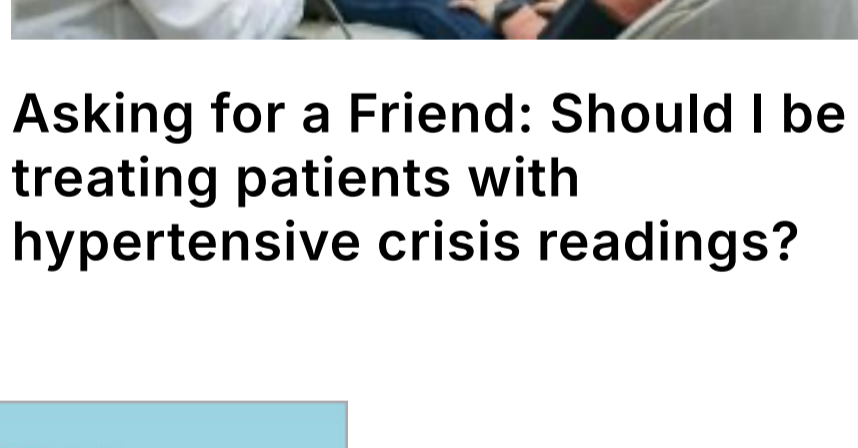
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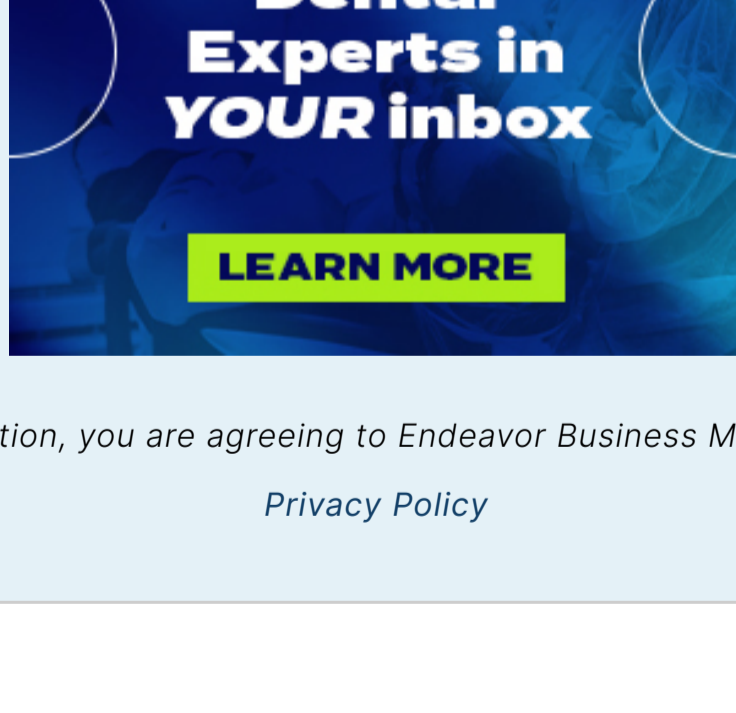


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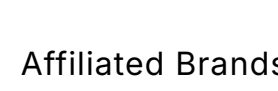
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