In Mississippi, over half of adults have had one or more permanent teeth removed because of gum disease or tooth decay.

**Strategies for Maintaining Good Oral Health**

- Thoroughly brush your teeth with a soft toothbrush twice a day and floss to prevent sore gums and gum disease.
- Regular use of mouthwash can kill the bacteria responsible for bad breath and prevent gum disease.
- Visit a dental provider, once every 6 months.
- Avoid tobacco and limit alcohol.
- Eat wisely – limit foods with sugars and simple starches and the number of snacks eaten throughout the day.

**The Burden of Oral Disease**

- Gum disease and tooth decay are the most common causes of tooth loss (CDC). In Mississippi, one in every five adults (20.4%) who are aged 65 years and older have lost all their teeth, compared to 12% in the nation.
- More than half of Mississippi adults (over 1.1 million, 53%) have had one or more permanent teeth removed because of gum disease or tooth decay compared to 41% in the nation.
- Among adults aged 45 years and over in Mississippi, 71.0% have had at least one permanent tooth removed.

**Figure 1. Percent of Mississippi Adults who Have had One or More Permanent Teeth Removed Due to Gum Disease or Decay, by Age, MS BRFSS 2018**

- 14.4% of women and 51.6% of men have had one or more permanent teeth removed because of gum disease or tooth decay.
- Among adults age 45 years and over, 13.3% of men and 14.0% of women have lost all their permanent teeth.
• In Mississippi, about 58% of African-American adults have had one or more permanent teeth removed compared to 52% for White adults.

• Among adults age 45 years and over, 15% of African-American adults and 13.5% White adults have lost all their permanent teeth.

The prevalence of having teeth removed because of gum disease or tooth decay varies by education level.

![Figure 2. Percent of Permanent Teeth Removal among Mississippi Adults, by Education Level, MS BRFSS 2018](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than High School</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access to Dental Care in MS

• In 2018, 54% of adults in Mississippi visited a dentist or dental clinic within the past year.

• Dental visits were similar between women and men (56% of women and 52% of men). However, there are disparities in MS in access to dental care, fewer MS adults who have not attended college, have lower incomes and are members of racial/ethnic minority groups visited the dentist or a dental clinic.

• About half of adults (49%) over 45 years had not visited a dentist in 2018.

• According to BRFSS 2010, more than half of Mississippi adults (57%) reported having their teeth cleaned by a dentist or dental hygienist within the past year, while 3.5% reported never having had their teeth cleaned.

• In 2018, more than three in every five (62%) Mississippi adults who had not had any of their permanent teeth removed visited a dentist at least once every year.