

Frequency of Dental Visits Can Decrease the Number of Teeth Lost

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Dental Visits in Relation to Tooth Loss

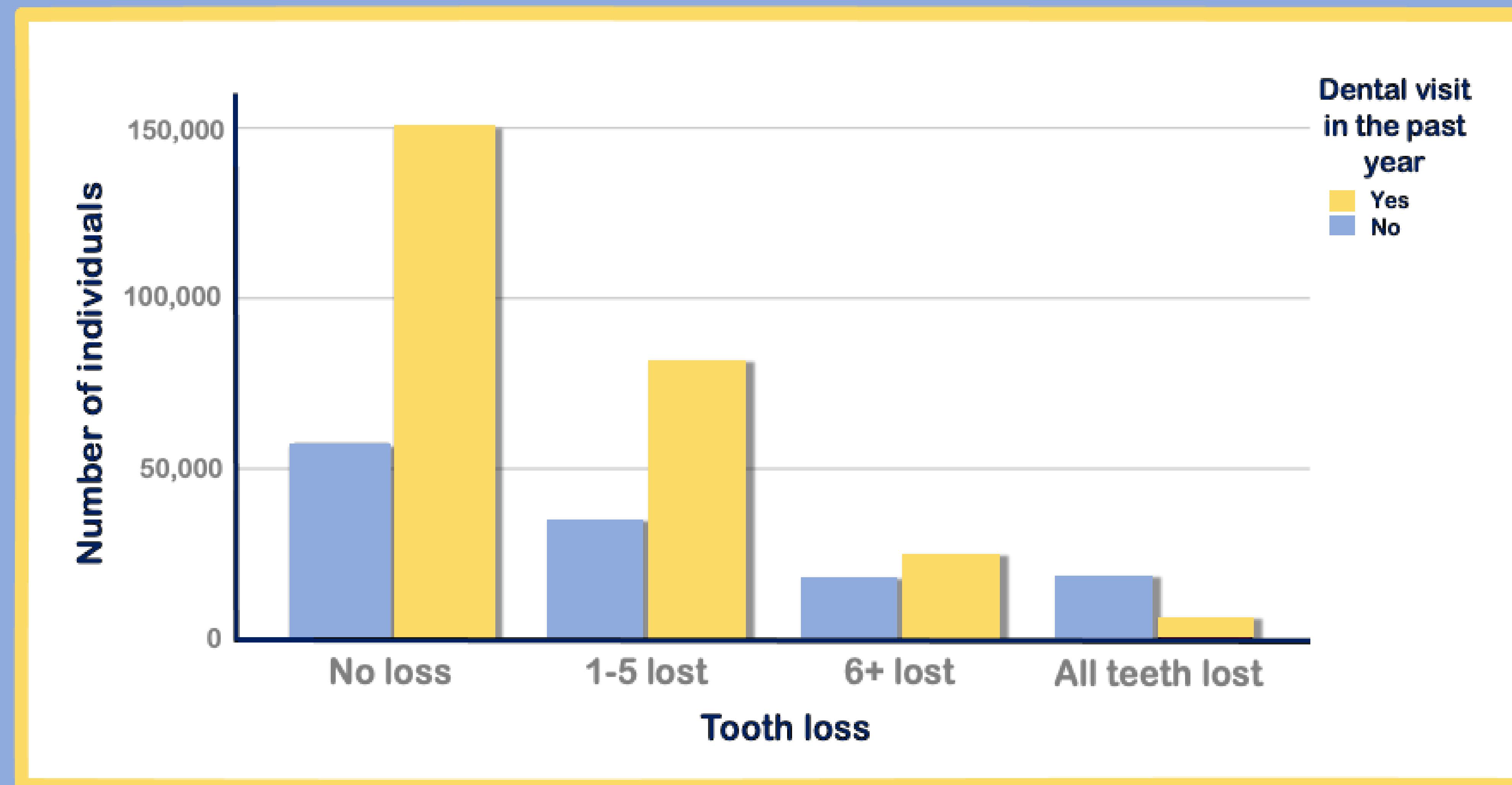


Figure 1: The above graph shows the **negative relations** between losing teeth and going to the dentist. You can see that individuals who visited the dentist reported **far fewer** instances of tooth loss than those who did not visit the dentist.

RESULTS

A hierarchical binary regression was used to examine the predictors of seeing the dentist (67% of the population): age, rurality, insurance availability, and income. The equation was significant ($X^2(5)=37,000.47$ $p<0.001$) and correctly classified 71.3%.

Each regression uniquely continued however; odds ratios were similar:

Variable	Odds Ratios
Age	1.02
Urban	0.88
Insurance	0.445
Income	1.25
Number of missing teeth	0.63

Figure 3: Age and income were the greatest predictors for people visiting the dentist. These stats show that people with more money are 1.25x more likely to visit a dentist. These results can be confirmed by findings from J. B. Shannon (2012) and Edelstein (2005).

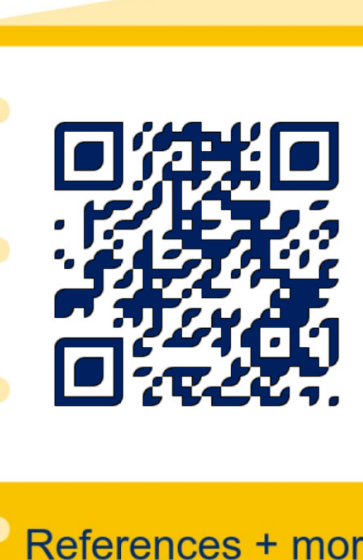
DISCUSSION

Our study, like many others, including J.B. Shannon (2012), concluded that more recent visits to the dentist are linked to better oral health. Rurality was less influential than age and income.

All the variables were proven significant; however, this data was collected via a voluntary phone survey. Because of this, it is possible that some of the variables, specifically the rural community, may have **more** of a significance than observed. Future research should examine the number of dentists in a given area in relation to the surrounding population, cost of visit, local average income, and accepted insurance. This research would paint a more vivid picture of the oral health disparity in rural areas.

Please scan QR code for an annotated bibliography, related literatures, additional information:

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References + more!

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INTRO

Riley (2012) defines health disparities as a difference in the amount of reported disease, health outcomes, and/or healthcare access in a specific population. Disparities in oral health can be seen in four different categories: age, place, insurance access, and income. We sought to examine the contributions of these four social determinants of health (SDOH) and current oral health (53% no loss, 6% all lost) in relation to annual dental visits (67%).

METHODS

We used the results of 388,174 adults who completed the 2020 CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).

With this data we examined the relations among age (average=54), rurality (15%), income (\bar{x} =\$40,000), and insurance (91%) as predictors of seeing a dentist in the past year.

Using the BRFSS we were also able to compare the data of the number of teeth lost with the data collected on the date of individuals last trip to the dentist.

	Visited dentist in past year	No dental visit in past year
No teeth lost	72.3%	27.7%
1-5 teeth lost	70.3%	29.7%
6+ teeth lost	58.2%	41.8%
All teeth lost	25.5%	74.5%

Figure 2: This is a table taken from the total sample size (388,174) that contains the percentage of individuals experiencing various levels of tooth loss, separated by the date of the most recent dental visit. (the percentages add up by row, not column)