Medical Xpress

Risk of frailty associated with changes in oral function

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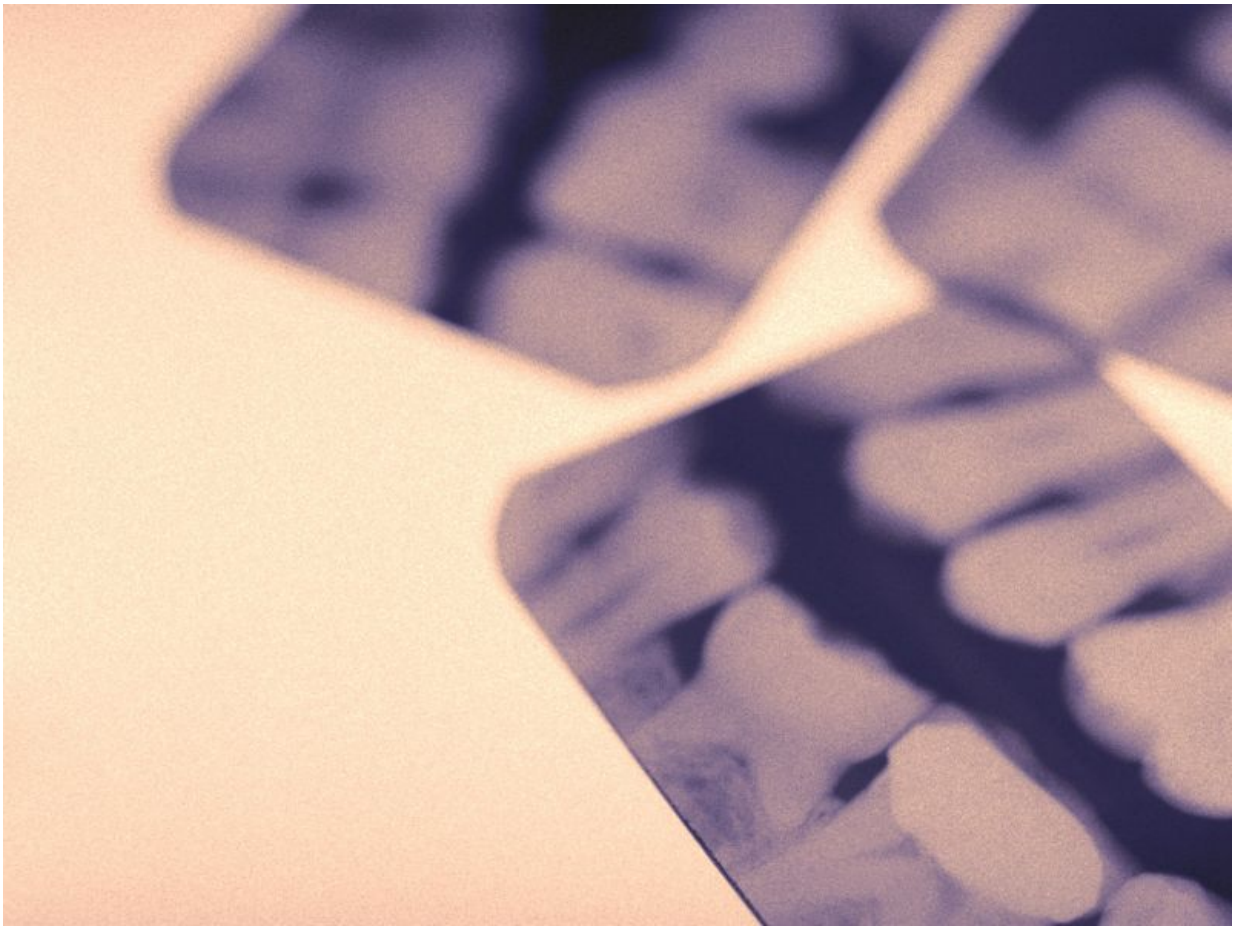

(HealthDay)—Aging is tied to changes in oral function, according to a

study published online Sept. 22 in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Yutaka Watanabe, D.D.S., Ph.D., from the Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology, and colleagues conducted detailed physical testing to classify elderly adults (≥65 years) by frailty (mobility, strength, endurance, physical activity, and nutrition): robust, prefrail, or frail. Additionally, the numbers of present teeth and functional teeth were counted, plus measurements of occlusal force, masseter muscle thickness, and oral diadochokinesis (ODK) rate.

The researchers found that the frail group had significantly fewer teeth present (women aged ≥70), lower occlusal force (women aged ≥70; men aged ≥80), lower masseter muscle thickness, and lower ODK rate, compared to the robust group. Multivariate analysis indicated that frailty was also significantly associated with age, Geriatric Depression Scale score, skeletal muscle mass index, Mini-Mental State Examination score, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, albumin and triglyceride levels, and oral function.

"The risk of frailty was associated with lower occlusal force, masseter muscle thickness, and ODK rate," the authors write.

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