

Study suggests wearing dentures may affect a person's nutrition

April 21 2022



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Dentures may have a potentially negative impact on a person's overall nutrition, according to new research from Regenstrief Institute and Indiana University School of Dentistry. The research team leveraged electronic dental and health records to gain a better understanding of

how oral health treatments affect individuals' overall health over time.

This is believed to be the first study to report the results of utilizing lab values of nutritional biomarkers and linking them with dental records.

"Dentures are a significant change for a person. They do not provide the same chewing efficiency, which may alter eating habits," said senior author Thankam Thyvalikakath, DMD, MDS, Ph.D., director of the Regenstrief and IU School of Dentistry Dental Informatics program. "Dentists need to be aware of this and provide advice or a referral for nutrition counseling. These patients need support during the transition and possible continued monitoring."

For the study, the research team matched the [dental records](#) of more than 10,000 patients in Indiana with medical laboratory data, specifically markers for malnutrition. The [laboratory tests](#) included complete blood count, basic metabolic profile and lipid and thyroid panel tests, among others. They compared the lab results from two years before a patient received dentures to the two years after.

Researchers found that people with dentures had a significant decline in certain nutrition markers over those two years. People who did not wear dentures did not experience this decline. The marker levels were still within normal range, but researchers say there is the potential that the levels will continue to fall as more time passes. They urge dentists to be aware of this possibility.

The next steps in this research area are to look at other factors that may influence nutrition, including insurance status and dental clinic characteristics.

The research is published in the *Journal of Prosthodontics*.

More information: Grace Gomez Felix Gomez et al, Nutritional Assessment of Denture Wearers Using Matched Electronic Dental-Health Record Data, *Journal of Prosthodontics* (2022). [DOI: 10.1111/jopr.13505](https://doi.org/10.1111/jopr.13505)

Provided by Regenstrief Institute

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