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Prosthodontists: Do Missing Teeth Kill Job Prospects? Infographic Shows Smile's Importance
Prosthodontists promote value of maintaining healthy, natural teeth for life



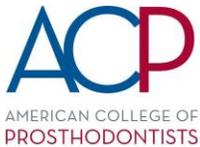
Source: <http://www.mycareertopia.com/34-crucial-tips-next-job-interview-infographic/>

CHICAGO — A killer smile can be just as important as a killer resume or a killer LinkedIn profile. According to a trending infographic on social media reposted from MyCareerTopia.com by Interview Laboratory (pictured left), a common nonverbal mistake made during job interviews -- not smiling -- ranked as the #3 blunder. Naturally, it's tough to smile when you're missing teeth, which strikes one third of Americans today.

A popular Facebook-liked article in USA Today, featured young working-class people in poverty-stricken areas of the United States as having trouble finding jobs because they are missing some or all of their teeth. To secure employment, many of these young people attend Remote Area Medical (RAM) events for free dental care and/or purchasing dentures to improve their job prospects.

“Dentures are not just for the elderly anymore,” says Victoria A. Vickers, DDS, a Prosthodontist based in San Antonio. “I might see one to two young people a month who are looking to replace teeth they have lost due to dental disease. When a front tooth is missing, this becomes a big issue in getting a job. Patients lose their self-esteem and might stop looking for a job until they can get their teeth replaced.” Dr. Vickers is a member of the spokespersons network of the American College of Prosthodontists (ACP). Prosthodontists are specialized dentists with advanced training in treating oral health issues such as replacing missing or broken teeth with dental implants, crowns, bridges, veneers or dentures. “What people don’t realize is that restored teeth require more maintenance than natural teeth.”

The *USA Today* story said, “nearly one in five working-age adults in some Southern and Appalachian states have lost at least that many teeth, according to statistics from the Commonwealth Fund.” The story included interviews with patients at a free dental clinic in Wise, Va., many of whom were from Appalachia, a region where many people have lost their teeth due to poor oral hygiene habits, poor eating habits and lack of dental insurance to visit a dentist regularly.



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Dr. Vickers, who has volunteered at Mission of Mercy, free one-day dental clinics that take place across the country, said the lack of early detection and treatment of dental decay can leave patients with such rampant dental disease that they choose to have their teeth removed because they can't afford to save them. Dr. Vickers encourages patients to practice good oral hygiene habits to save their natural teeth, not only for esthetic reasons, but for health reasons.

A recent peer-reviewed research article recently published in *The Journal of Prosthodontics* says that significant tooth loss (missing more than 12-17 of one's 32 natural teeth) is associated with a multitude of bad health outcomes including increased risk of overall diseases that can lead to death. Patients who have lost their teeth are at an increased risk for developing malnutrition or obesity, cardiovascular disease, head and neck cancer and reduced cognitive function. Patients who don't properly clean their dentures are at a higher risk of developing pneumonia, which can lead to death.

The article, called "*Complete Edentulism and Comorbid Diseases: An Update*", notes that patients who keep at least 15 to 20 natural teeth are less likely to develop serious comorbid diseases. The article is the result of a systematic review of current literature on the relationship between tooth loss and oral-systemic diseases. It was written by board certified prosthodontist David A. Felton, DDS, MSD, FACP, who recently joined UMMC as Dean after serving as a professor in the Department of Restorative Dentistry at the West Virginia University School of Dentistry in Morgantown, W. Va., and regularly saw the costs (financial, emotional and time) of patients living along the Appalachian Mountains missing most of their teeth due to decay, disease or even misinformation – asking a dentist to do elective pulling of all their teeth as a wedding gift "so they don't have to worry about their teeth causing problems later in life."

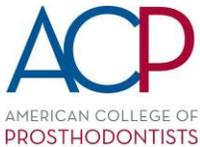
Per Dr. Felton, "As a prosthodontist and a dentist, we must warn people about the risks of not taking care of their teeth. It's time to educate all Americans to do everything possible to keep as many of your adult teeth for as long as possible throughout one's life and as we age as it's cheaper, healthier and possible. Don't think that pulling out healthy teeth will save you problems down the road – it's not true. Keeping your original teeth if they are healthy for as long as you can is the best thing you can do for your oral health and overall wellbeing. If you must lose teeth, get them replaced as quickly as possible and maintain your implants, crowns or dentures to keep your whole mouth healthy."

Board certified prosthodontist and ACP President, Carl F. Driscoll, DMD, FACP, encourages patients to maintain their natural teeth by brushing for two minutes twice a day, flossing once a day and eating a healthy diet. Visiting a dentist for regular cleanings and examinations can stop dental disease in its tracks before it becomes a more serious and expensive problem down the road, he said.

If patients lose their teeth, Dr. Felton recommends that they visit a Prosthodontist to replace their teeth right away. The most common and least expensive tooth-replacement methods are full or partial dentures. Full dentures replace all the teeth by resting on the gums that cover the jawbones. Partial dentures attach to the teeth that are still present and rest on the gums and bone where the teeth are missing, according to the ACP.

For patients who need dentures right away, Prosthodontists can place "immediate dentures," which are temporary and can take about an hour. These dentures are for short-term-use only, and should be replaced with high quality, long-lasting permanent dentures, which can be available in a few days, Dr. Vickers said. In addition, Prosthodontists can use CAD-CAM technology to create virtual digital dentures to replicate existing dentures to streamline the process and are excited about new technology options including 3D printing of dentures recently approved to go to market.

The ACP recommends that patients clean their dentures by hand with a dish washing liquid and a special denture brush every day. After rinsing them thoroughly, soak the dentures in a water-based cleaning solution overnight.



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Prosthodontists are specialized dentists with advanced training in oral health issues, who are committed to improving patient outcomes. From implants, crowns, veneers and tooth whitening, to full-mouth reconstruction, Prosthodontists specialize in digital dentistry, CAD/CAM, and cosmetic dentistry solutions. The ACP is the only Prosthodontic specialty organization whose membership is based solely on education credentials. ACP members must be in or have completed an ADA-accredited advanced education program in Prosthodontics.

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About the ACP

The American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) is the official sponsoring organization for the specialty of Prosthodontics, which is one of the only nine recognized specialties of the American Dental Association. Founded in 1970, ACP is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to enhancing patient care, advancing the art and science of Prosthodontics, promoting the specialty of Prosthodontics to the public and other dentists and healthcare professionals, ensuring the quality of prosthodontic education and providing professional services to its membership. For more information and to find your local prosthodontist, consumers can visit GoToAPro.org and oral health professionals can access Prosthodontics.org.

Access Links to free selected *Journal of Prosthodontics* Research:

[Complete Edentulism and Comorbid Diseases: An Update](#)

[Special Issue: ACP Clinical Practice Guidelines: Recall and Maintenance of Patients with Tooth-Borne and Implant-Borne Dental Restorations.](#)