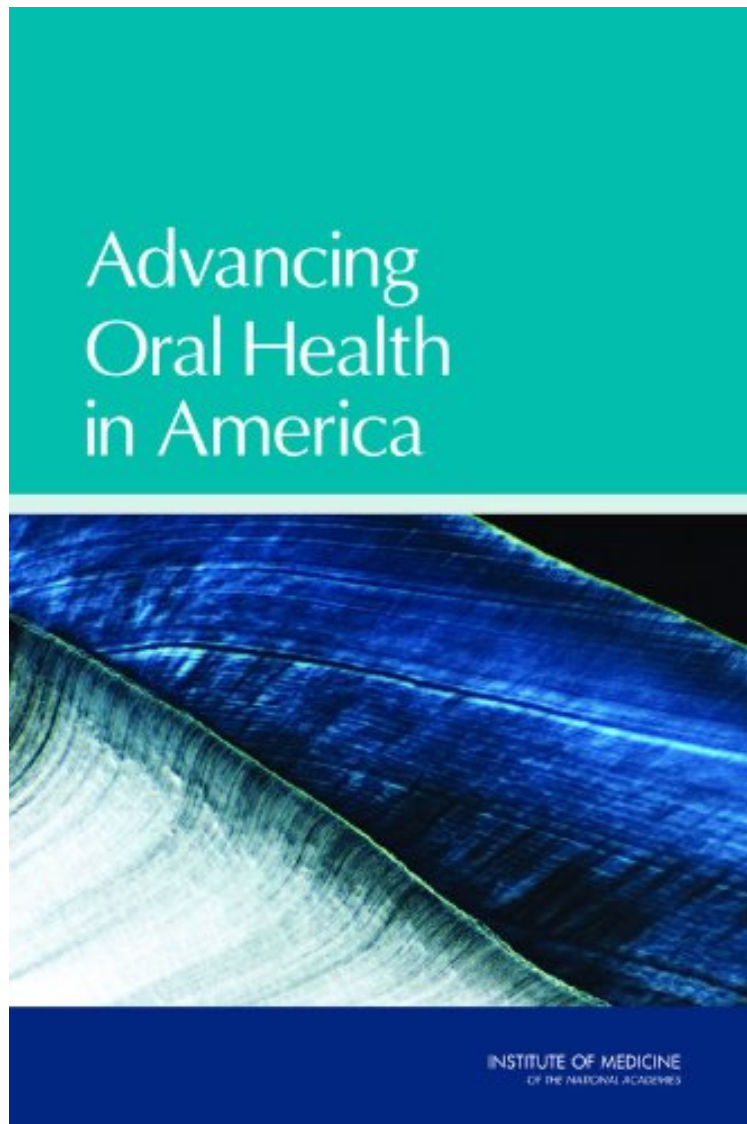


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Advancing Oral Health in America

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Though it is highly preventable, tooth decay is a common chronic disease both in the United States and worldwide. Evidence shows that decay and other oral diseases may be associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes, respiratory

disease, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. However, individuals and many health care professionals remain unaware of the risk factors and preventive approaches for many oral diseases. They do not fully appreciate how oral health affects overall health and well-being. In *Advancing Oral Health in America*, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) highlights the vital role that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) can play in improving oral health and oral health care in the United States. The IOM recommends that HHS design an oral health initiative which has clearly articulated goals, is coordinated effectively, adequately funded and has high-level accountability. In addition, the IOM stresses three key areas needed for successfully maintaining oral health as a priority issue: strong leadership, sustained interest, and the involvement of multiple stakeholders from both the public and private sectors. *Advancing Oral Health in America* provides practical recommendations that the Department of Health and Human Services can use to improve oral health care in America. The report will serve as a vital resource for federal health agencies, health care professionals, policy makers, researchers, and public and private health organizations.