

## Abstract

The importance of oral health has grown significantly over the last few centuries, especially with the advancement of medical technology. The movement towards obtaining adequate oral health is a trend that is growing; however, it is still behind the care which patients take for their overall health. The knowledge of oral health within the Hispanic-America community has become a topic of major discussion because of the poor oral health trend that has been found. Studies, done many times by the American Dental Association (ADA), have highlighted that Hispanics in the United States suffer much higher rates of oral health disease at all ages.

The focus and analysis of this paper will involve providing general information about the importance and the consequences of poor oral health. Of major importance are the diseases which correspond with poor oral health. Further, the disparity among the Hispanic population in comparison to the Caucasian population will also be explored. A central issue here is the impact of dental insurance on Hispanics being able to receive adequate care. One topic in particular will be the implications for those who do not have dental insurance. Other important factors such as social, socioeconomic, and generational issues will be explored as well.

This topic is of major relevance because there has been a large gap in studies done about oral health of the Hispanic-American population. It is quite easy to find studies about Hispanic oral health leading into the late 1990s and early 2000s; however, studies become more scarce and harder to find as the years approach 2010. During this same period, the Hispanic population within the United States boomed. From 2000-2010 alone, the Hispanic-American population increased by 43%. The frequency of studies about Hispanics should have increased with the rate of the Hispanic-American population, although it appears this has not been the case.

The last issue explored will be how oral health diseases can be reversed among the Hispanic-American community. Further topics discussed will be the implementation of dental programs to teach oral health, where to implement these programs, and how effective English only programs will be. The end goal of this thesis is to identify the problems that exist among the Hispanic-American community and solutions to help rectify them. This thesis will analyze current issues among the Hispanic-American community which have plagued their oral health, and the steps needed to reduce these concerns.