

Statement of Oral Health Alliance on the 2020-25 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The Oral Health Alliance, with representatives from oral health providers, nutrition and public health professional organizations, groups representing children and older adults, industry, and consumer groups, strongly regrets that USDA and HHS did not recommend Americans to adopt routine oral hygiene in the *2020-25 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The Alliance presented extensive scientific evidence and public health justification for including affordable and feasible advice to brush teeth, clean between teeth, chew sugarfree gum for 20 minutes after meals or snacks and drink fluoridated water. These simple practices prevent poor oral health and untreated dental caries that could lead to chronic diseases and impede one's ability to chew fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and other nutrient-rich foods, as recommended in the new DGAs. Almost 46 percent of children ages 2 to 19 years have treated and untreated dental caries, and 13 percent of this age group have untreated dental caries. With the opportunity to prevent the substantial problems of dental caries, federal agencies should incorporate messages about the benefit of adopting routine oral health practices in educational materials for millions of Americans suffering from, or at risk of, dental caries. The Oral Health Alliance is eager to support and amplify the work of the USDA and DHHS in educating all Americans on convenient ways to make oral hygiene part of a daily routine to protect their teeth.