

Paper Category:	Oral Health and Swallowing
Paper Title: (Arial Font; 14 Pt Size)	Association Between the Number of Functional Teeth and Physical Function in Community-dwelling Older Adults
Abstract Body: (Arial Font; 12Pt Size)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Objectives • Method • Results • Discussions and Conclusions
<p>(Maximum word limit - 300 words)</p> <p>Background: Functional teeth are important for maintaining physical function as they improve masticatory function and nutritional status in older adults. However, few studies have evaluated the association between the number of functional teeth and physical function.</p> <p>Objectives: This study aims to evaluate the association between the number of functional teeth and physical function in community-dwelling older adults.</p> <p>Methods: We conducted a cross-sectional analysis using data from 1,758 participants aged 70–84 years (mean age, 76.5±3.9 years; 53.8% women) who were enrolled in the Korean Frailty and Aging Cohort Study. Remaining teeth and prosthetic teeth in panoramic radiography were counted as functional teeth, and the number of functional teeth was categorized into two groups: <20 and ≥20. Physical function was assessed using handgrip strength, 5-chair stand test (5-CST), gait speed, and Short Physical Performance Battery (SPPB). In the multiple linear regression analysis, we accounted for potential confounding variables related to sociodemographic and lifestyle factors, mental and medical conditions, as well as oral health.</p> <p>Results: Seven-hundred and fourteen (40.6%) participants had <20 functional teeth. The participants with <20 functional teeth had a higher mean age, were more likely men, were more likely to have at least one prosthetic tooth, and experienced more chewing discomfort than those with ≥20 functional teeth. In the fully adjusted model, participants with ≥20 functional teeth showed significantly better physical performance than those with <20 functional teeth (5-CST: β=-0.598, 95% confidence interval [CI] -1.011 to -0.185; gait speed: β=0.034, 95% CI 0.011 to 0.056; SPPB: β=0.239, 95% CI 0.095 to 0.383). However, no significant associations were found for handgrip strength after considering mental and medical conditions.</p> <p>Discussion and Conclusion: The number of functional teeth were independently associated with physical function, suggesting that maintaining 20 or more functional teeth is important for preserving physical function in community-dwelling older adults.</p>	

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