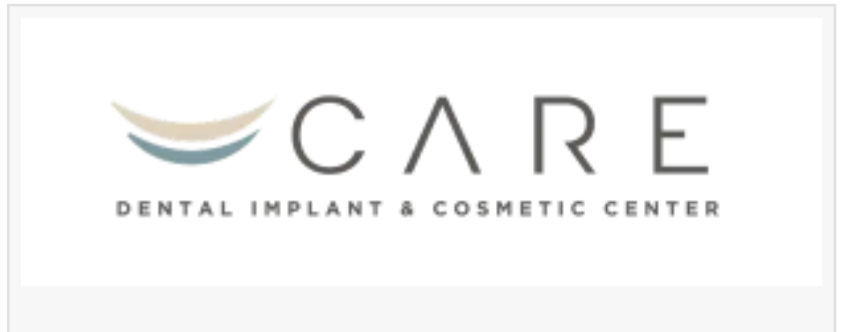


Fear and Cost — Not a Lack of Options — Keep Most Americans From Fixing Failing Teeth, Meridian Implant Dentist Says

New data shows about 7 in 10 adults carry some dental fear, and cost keeps many from care, even as full-arch treatment has never been more accessible.



MERIDIAN, ID, UNITED STATES, August 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The

biggest barriers to fixing failing or missing teeth today aren't clinical. They're fear and cost. That's the conclusion of a new review of national oral-health data by [Care Dental Implant & Cosmetic Center](#), the Meridian practice led by Dr. Drew Phillips, one of Idaho's most experienced All-on-X providers.

Dental fear is nearly universal. A 2024 national survey in the Journal of the American Dental Association found about 72.6% of U.S. adults report some level of dental fear, and 1 in 4 report severe fear. Cost compounds it: fewer than half of adults saw a dentist in the past year, the ADA's Health Policy Institute lists affordability among the top reasons people stay away, and roughly a third of working-age adults have no dental insurance.

The consequences mount with age. The CDC reports more than 1 in 7 adults 65 and older have lost all their teeth, and about a third have lost six or more. The ADA finds 38% of adults say the condition of their mouth makes life less satisfying, and 1 in 4 avoid smiling altogether.

Idaho mirrors the pattern, with a sharp income divide. About 1 in 8 Idaho adults age 65 and older (12.7%) have lost all their natural teeth, according to America's Health Rankings' analysis of CDC data (2024), and among lower-income Idaho seniors that figure more than doubles to roughly 27%, a gap showing that cost and access, not biology, decide who keeps their teeth.

"Most people I meet didn't wait because they didn't care. They waited because they were scared, or they assumed they couldn't afford it," said Dr. Drew Phillips, DMD. "The clinical side of replacing teeth has never been more predictable. The real work now is removing the fear and the financial uncertainty that keep people stuck."

What's changed for Treasure Valley patients

Dr. Phillips says several shifts have quietly changed what's possible for people who have put off treatment:

- Sedation options, including IV sedation, so an anxious patient can have a full-arch procedure while comfortably asleep.
- Full-arch techniques like All-on-4 that often avoid bone grafting and can deliver a fixed set of teeth the same day.
- Transparent planning and financing, so cost becomes a known number rather than a source of dread.

"Nobody should lose the ability to eat or smile because a dental visit made them feel judged or blindsided by a bill," Dr. Phillips said. "Our model is built around the opposite: a calm consultation, an honest plan, and options that fit real budgets."

He encourages anyone who has delayed care to start with a no-pressure consultation and a 3D scan, which often reveals more paths forward than people expect.

About Care Dental Implant & Cosmetic Center

Care Dental Implant & Cosmetic Center is a Meridian, Idaho practice focused on dental implants and full-arch restoration, serving the Treasure Valley, including Boise, Nampa, Eagle, and Caldwell. Led by Dr. Drew Phillips, DMD, it provides consultation, surgery, and final restoration in one location, with an emphasis on honest, no-pressure care. Learn more at www.caresmiles.com.

About Dr. Drew Phillips, DMD

Dr. Drew Phillips is the implant and full-arch dentist behind Care Dental Implant & Cosmetic Center. A valedictorian graduate of the Dental College of Georgia, he has placed more than 8,000 dental implants and is one of Idaho's most experienced All-on-X providers, focusing on full-arch implant surgery, complex treatment planning, and sedation dentistry. He teaches these techniques to dentists across the country.

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