

# America's Seniors Deserve Dental Coverage in Medicare: Martha's Story

When the mouth is left out of coverage, the whole body suffers. Two-thirds of the seniors and people with disabilities on Medicare do not have any oral health coverage and their health is worse for it.

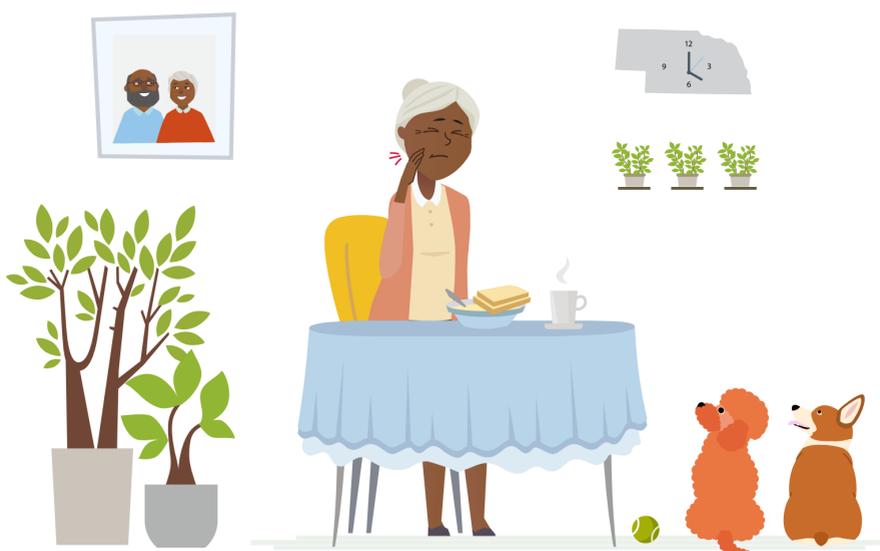
## MEET MARTHA



Martha\* is a 75-year-old woman in Nebraska. She has two dogs and three grandchildren. She's worked hard all her life, and is enjoying her retirement despite her modest means and ongoing health problems.

Medicare helps Martha get care for most of her health problems—but it does not cover dental care.

## MARTHA HAS SEVERE MOUTH PAIN



Martha often suffers from severe pain in her mouth. It not only hurts, but it also keeps her from chewing properly and limits her nutrition.

Much of Martha's tooth pain is from an infection in her gums. One of her hypertension medications makes her mouth dry and at greater risk of infection.

## MARTHA'S ORAL HEALTH PROBLEMS CAUSE OTHER HEALTH ISSUES



Infections that start in the mouth can spread to other parts of the body—even the brain or heart. Martha hopes she can save enough money for a dental visit and antibiotics before it comes to that.

Martha wants to get oral health care, but she can't afford to. Like most seniors, cost is the number one reason she hasn't been to a dentist in the past year.



Adding a dental benefit to Medicare is a needed, wise investment that will keep the millions of people like Martha healthy and financially stable. And it will keep medical costs down too—for Martha and for Medicare.

*\*Martha is a composite of real stories Families USA collected through its story telling initiative*