CLSA Approved Project

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Project Title
Oral Health, Nutrition, and Frailty: A mediation analysis from the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging

Project Summary
Oral health is a critical component of overall health, and poor oral health has been shown to be a risk factor for incident frailty. Frailty is a clinical state in which there is an increase in an individual's vulnerability for developing increased dependency and/or mortality when exposed to a stressor. There is a hypothesis that the link between poor oral health and frailty is through poor nutrition. Poor oral health (such as loss of teeth, dental pain, and/or chewing problems) could cause an individual to choose foods that are easier to chew and eat (generally less healthy and less nutrient dense foods), and this then contributes frailty. However, studies where this is tested over time to be able to take into account the effects of poor oral health and poor nutrition on worsening frailty have not yet been done. Finally, we propose a longitudinal analyses to better explain how to delay or lessen frailly by improving oral health or by improving nutrition.

Keywords
Oral health, Nutrition, Frailty, CLSA