

Oral health

3.5 billion
people worldwide



and around 400 million people in the WHO African Region were affected by oral disease in 2017.

In the WHO African Region, the spectrum of oral diseases also includes **Noma** which is a necrotizing disease that affects children between the ages of 2 and 6 years.

Six conditions

make up the bulk of the oral disease burden

1. dental caries, or tooth decay
2. gum disease
3. oral cancers
4. oral manifestations of HIV
5. oro-dental trauma
6. cleft lips and palates.

Almost all

are largely preventable, or can be treated in their early stages.

-BUT-

Untreated dental caries

of permanent teeth is one of the most prevalent diseases globally and regionally.



Most oral diseases in the African Region

remain untreated

due to



a lack /unequal distribution of oral health professionals



a lack of appropriate facilities



and - in many countries in Africa - no dedicated oral health budget - which means that people have to incur significant out-of-pocket expenses for obtaining oral health service.

Modifiable risk factors

are common to most oral diseases and conditions as well as the four leading NCDs.* For example:



tobacco use



alcohol consumption



unhealthy diets (high in free sugars)

Public health interventions

can reduce the burden of oral diseases and other NCDs by addressing common risk factors.

* Non-communicable diseases (cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes).



World Health Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR Africa