

Background

This report contains Vermont data on oral health care before and during pregnancy for 2012-2015 and overall estimates for 34 PRAMS sites for 2015. Receiving oral health care and education during pregnancy is important both for women’s health and for their children’s oral health.¹ Pregnant women may develop gingivitis, where their gums swell and bleed easily. If left untreated, gingivitis may lead to more severe gum disease. Most dental work is safe during pregnancy (e.g., teeth cleaning, dental x-rays, filling of a decayed tooth), and regular teeth cleanings before and during pregnancy can help protect against gum disease.¹⁻³

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is a survey of women who recently gave birth that asks about their experiences, behaviors and healthcare utilization before, during and shortly after their pregnancy. Vermont has participated in PRAMS since 2001. PRAMS sites that met or exceeded the response rate thresholds¹ are included in overall estimates.

National Oral Health Goals

| National Goals | Maternal Oral Health Care |
|---|---|
| Healthy People 2020 Objective ⁴ | Increase the proportion of children, adolescents, and adults who use the oral health care system in the past year |
| Title V National Performance Measure ⁵ | To increase the number of pregnant women who have a dental visit during pregnancy |

Teeth Cleaning Before and During Pregnancy

Vermont women were significantly more likely than those in other PRAMS sites to have a teeth cleaning in the 12 months before pregnancy as well as during pregnancy.

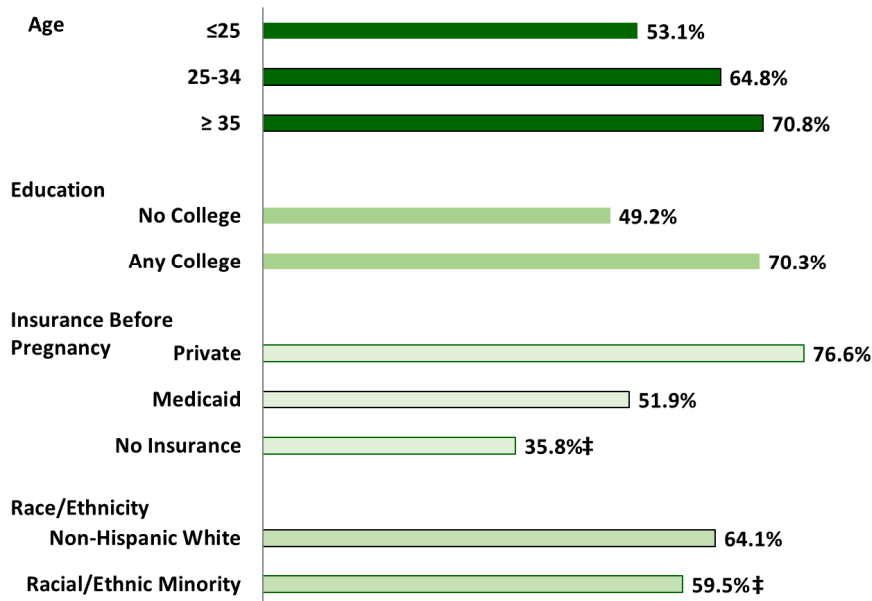
The proportion of Vermont women getting a teeth cleaning during pregnancy in 2015 was significantly higher than in 2012.

| Core PRAMS Indicators | Vermont % (95% CI)* | | | | 34 PRAMS Sites % (95% CI)* |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2015 |
| During the 12 months before getting pregnant; I had my teeth cleaned by a dentist or dental hygienist | 64.0 (60.9-66.9) | 65.3 (62.1-68.4) | 63.2 (60.1-66.2) | 63.1 (59.8-66.3) | 56.3 (55.5-57.1) |
| During pregnancy, I had my teeth cleaned by a dentist or dental hygienist | 55.4 (52.2-58.5) | 59.2 (55.9-62.4) | 59.3 (56.1-62.4) | 62.0 (58.7-65.3) | 48.3 (47.5-49.2) |

* Weighted Percent (95% Confidence Interval)

¹Response rate threshold for PRAMS sites was 60% for 2012-2014 and 55% for 2015

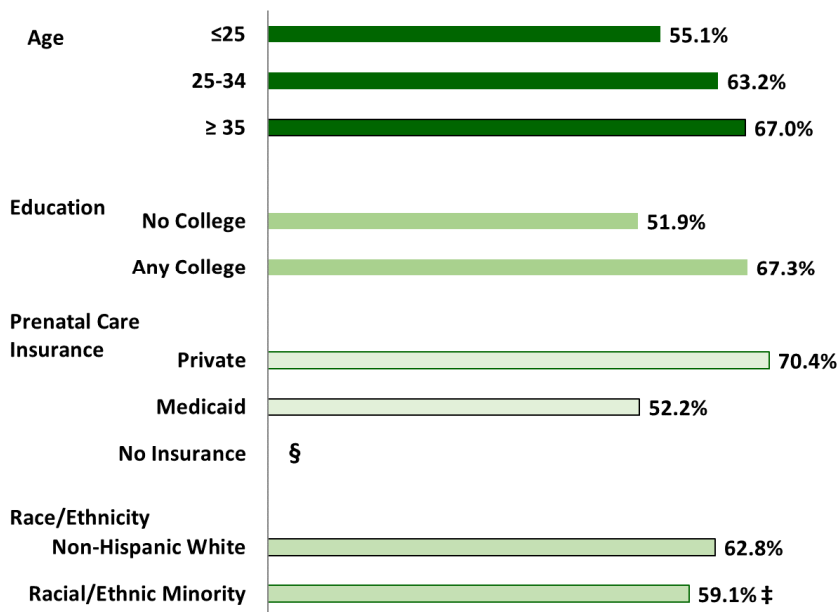
Mothers Who Had Their Teeth Cleaned Before Pregnancy
2015 Vermont PRAMS



Women in older age groups, those with any college education, and those with private insurance were more likely to get a teeth cleaning before pregnancy.

There was no statistically significant difference observed by racial/ethnic minority status.

Mothers Who Had Their Teeth Cleaned During Pregnancy
2015 Vermont PRAMS



Women aged 25 or older, those with any college education, and those with private insurance were more likely to get a teeth cleaning during pregnancy.

There was no statistically significant difference observed by racial/ethnic minority status.

§ < 30 respondents; not reported.
‡ < 60 respondents; may not be reliable.

Oral Health Care During Pregnancy

Vermont mothers were more likely than among all PRAMS sites to know it is important to care for their teeth and gums during pregnancy, more likely to talk to a health care worker about care of teeth and gums, and more likely to have insurance for dental care during pregnancy. Although Vermont mothers were more likely to need to see a dentist about a problem during pregnancy, they were also more likely to see a dentist for a problem.

The rate of Vermont mothers who talked with a dental or other health care worker about care of teeth and gums during pregnancy was higher in 2015 than in 2012, as was the percent of Vermont mothers who reported having dental insurance during pregnancy.

| Core PRAMS Indicator | Vermont % (95% CI)* | | | | 34 PRAMS Sites % (95% CI)* |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2015 |
| I knew it was important to care for my teeth and gums during my pregnancy | 93.9 (92.2-95.3) | 95.2 (93.5-96.5) | 93.4 (91.5-94.8) | 95.8 (94.2-97.0) | 88.4 (87.8-89.0) |
| During pregnancy, a dental or other health care worker talked with me about how to care for my teeth and gums | 56.7 (53.6-59.8) | 57.3 (54.0-60.5) | 58.7 (55.5-61.8) | 64.4 (61.1-67.6) | 49.6 (48.8-50.4) |
| I had insurance to cover dental care during pregnancy | 73.9 (71.0-76.6) | 79.3 (76.5-81.9) | 77.3 (74.5-79.8) | 81.3 (78.5-83.8) | 72.6 (71.8-73.4) |
| During pregnancy, I needed to see a dentist for a problem | 21.6 (19.0-24.3) | 24.1 (21.3-27.1) | 21.4 (18.8-24.1) | 23.2 (20.4-26.3) | 19.6 (19.0-20.3) |
| During pregnancy, I went to a dentist or dental clinic about a problem | 14.5 (12.4-16.9) | 17.7 (15.3-20.4) | 17.1 (14.8-19.7) | 18.9 (16.2-21.8) | 14.8 (14.2-15.3) |

Oral health care key points:

- Despite most (95.8%) Vermont PRAMS respondents knowing it is important to care for their teeth and gums during pregnancy, about one-third (36.4%) of these respondents did not have their teeth cleaned during pregnancy.
- Over three-quarters (81.3%) of Vermont PRAMS respondents reported they had dental insurance during pregnancy, but only about two thirds (68.2%) of these respondents had their teeth cleaned during pregnancy.

Barriers to oral health care during pregnancy

Vermont did not significantly differ from other PRAMS sites on barriers to oral health care during pregnancy for 2015. A statistical test of independence (not included) indicated that the proportion of Vermonters who could not afford to go to the dentist or a dental clinic during pregnancy was significantly lower for 2015 than for 2012.

| Standard PRAMS indicator completed by mothers who reported they had a problem with their teeth or gums during pregnancy | Vermont % (95% CI)* | | | | Subset of PRAMS Sites % (95% CI)* |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2015 |
| I could not find a dentist or dental clinic that would take pregnant patients | 8.8 (5.5-13.8) | 7.7 (4.7-12.5) | 7.0 (4.1-11.8) | 11.6 (7.5-17.4) | 13.3 (10.8-16.3) |
| During pregnancy, I could not find a dentist or dental clinic that would take Medicaid patients† | 29.1 (21.1 - 38.6) | 22.9 (15.2 - 32.9) | 22.1 (14.8 - 31.7) | 27.8 (19.6 - 37.7) | 25.5 (21.2-30.4) |
| I did not think it was safe to go to the dentist during pregnancy | 16.4 (11.9-21.1) | 12.3 (8.3-17.9) | 12.0 (8.1-17.4) | 15.8 (10.9-22.3) | 18.4 (15.5-21.7) |
| During pregnancy, I could not afford to go to the dentist or dental clinic | 35.4 (29.2-42.2) | 24.3 (18.7-31.0) | 25.1 (19.3-31.9) | 23.8 (18.1-30.7) | 27.0 (23.9-30.4) |

* "Subset of PRAMS Sites" estimates include 6 PRAMS sites (Alabama, Connecticut, Maryland, Missouri, New York, and Vermont)

†Among women enrolled in Medicaid during pregnancy

Addressing barriers to oral health care in Vermont:

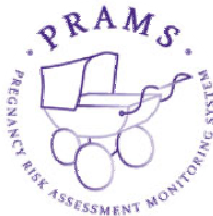
- In 2013, the Vermont Legislature removed the annual cap for benefits that pregnant women could receive under the Dr. Dinosaur/Medicaid program, meaning that Medicaid fully covered the dental costs of pregnant women through 60 days postpartum. PRAMS findings indicate that this has positively affected access to oral health care among pregnant Medicaid enrollees, but that there is room for improvement.

Resources

- American Dental Association: <http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/pregnancy/healthy-habits>
- Office on Women's Health: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/oral-health.html>
- Vermont Department of Health's Oral Health program: <http://www.healthvermont.gov/wellness/oral-health>

References:

1. Oral Health Care During Pregnancy Expert Workgroup. Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: A National Consensus Statement-Summary of an Expert Workgroup Meeting. 2012. Washington, DC: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center. Available at: <https://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/OralHealthPregnancyConsensus.pdf>
2. Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Oral Health Fact sheet. Available at: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/oral-health.html>
3. American Dental Association: Is It Safe To Go To the Dentist During Pregnancy? Available at: <http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/pregnancy/concerns>
4. Healthy People 2020 Objectives. Available at: <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/maternal-infant-and-child-health/objectives>
5. Title V National Performance Measures. Available at: <https://mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov/PrioritiesAndMeasures/NPMDistribution>



THE BEST SOURCE OF DATA ON MOTHERS AND BABIES