

Oral health

Prams asks about the care of teeth during pregnancy: whether the mother had a dental problem, went to a dentist or dental clinic or discussed oral hygiene with a dentist or other healthcare worker.

Public health importance

A pregnant woman's oral health affects the woman, her fetus and infant. In pregnant women, periodontal disease, which affects the gums and adjacent bone, is associated with pre-term and/or low birth-weight delivery.^{1,2,3} After delivery, infants or young children may develop cavities from maternal oral bacteria.⁴

All health care providers can promote oral health through oral examinations; advising patients about oral hygiene, diet and smoking cessation; and by making referrals to oral health practitioners.⁵ Access to oral health services during pregnancy may be constrained by the American Dental Association recommendations to avoid elective dental care during the first trimester and last half of the third trimester.⁶

In four PRAMS states, among mothers who reported having a dental problem, about one-half did not go for care.⁷

NM PRAMS findings

In 2002, 25% of mothers recalled discussion of oral hygiene during prenatal care (Table 56 / Figure 28), 13% had a dental problem and 33% had dental care (Table 57 / Figure 29). Among women with a dental problem, 56% had dental care (Table 58 / Figure 30). In 2001-2002, women who were more likely to have dental care included those with insurance, without public assistance or with more than high school education. Use of oral health

services differed by maternal residence (Table 60).

Action in NM

In 2002, 24 of 33 NM Counties were classified as full or partial dental health professional shortage areas.⁸ Senate Joint Memorial 21 offers proposals for improved access to oral health care to guide the New Mexico Oral Health Council, which includes members of the oral health care delivery system, the NM Dental Association and consumers. The Office of Dental Health of the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) educates the public, Head Start staff, and *promotoras* (lay prenatal health workers) about dental care. The office is also working to arrange Medicaid payment for dental care of pregnant women and to integrate oral health activities with other programs, such as case management in Families FIRST.

References

- ¹ Champagne CM, Madianos PN, Lief S, Murtha AP, Beck JD, Offenbacher S. Periodontal Medicine: emerging concepts in pregnancy outcomes. *J Int Acad Periodontol.* 2000;2:9-13.
- ² Champagne CM, Madianos PN, Lief S, Murtha AP, Beck JD, Offenbacher S. Periodontal Medicine: emerging concepts in pregnancy outcomes. *J Int Acad Periodontol.* 2000;2:9-13.
- ³ Jeffcoat MK, Geurs NC, Reddy MS, Cliver SP, Goldener RL, Hauth JC. Periodontal infection and preterm birth: results of a prospective study. *J Am Dent Assoc.* 2001;132:875-80.
- ⁴ Tanzer JM, Livingston J, Thompson AM. The microbiology of primary dental caries in humans. *J Dent Educ* 2001;65:1028-37.
- ⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General.* Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health, 2000.
- ⁶ American Dental Association. *Women's oral health issues.* Chicago: American Dental Association, 1995.
- ⁷ In NM, 44.7%; in Louisiana, 54.1%; and in Illinois, 54.9%. Gaffield ML, Colley Gilbert B, Malvitz DM, Romaguera P. Oral health during pregnancy: an analysis of information collected by the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System. *JADA* 2001;132:1009-1016.
- ⁸ NM Health Policy Commission. Quick Facts 2003, Health Care in New Mexico. Santa Fe, NM: 2003, p. 55. http://hpc.state.nm.us/Reports/Quickfacts_2003.pdf accessed 2/18/2005.

Figure 28

Percent of women whose prenatal healthcare worker discussed how to care for the teeth and gums, by year of infant's birth

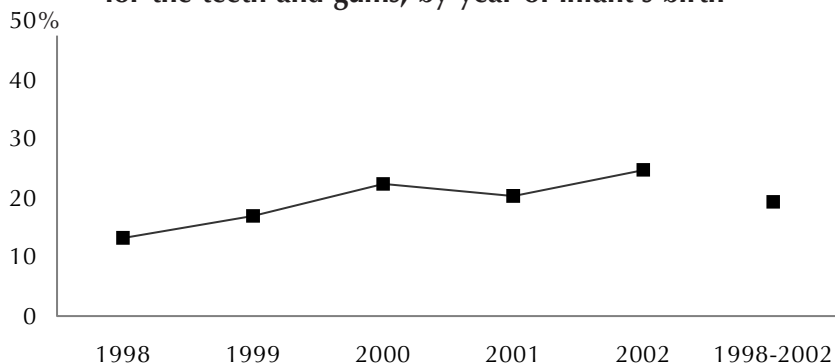


Table 56

% with discussion about teeth and gums		
Year	%	±
1998	13.0	2.4
1999	16.8	2.1
2000	22.2	2.1
2001	20.3	2.1
2002	24.6	2.3
1998-2002	19.4	1.0

Oral health

Figure 29

Percent of women who had

- ▲ a dental problem
- dental care, by year of infant's birth

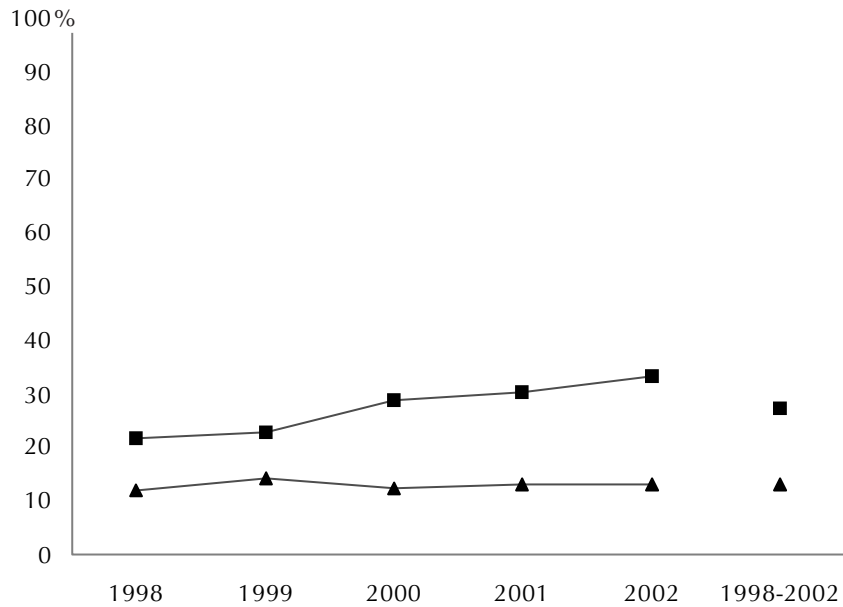


Table 57

% who had a dental problem		
Year	%	±
1998	11.9	2.3
1999	14.2	2.0
2000	12.3	1.7
2001	13.2	1.8
2002	12.9	1.8
1998-2002	12.9	0.9
% who had dental care		
Year	%	±
1998	21.5	2.9
1999	22.7	2.3
2000	28.7	2.3
2001	30.2	2.5
2002	33.2	2.5
1998-2002	27.1	1.1

Figure 30

Among women who had a dental problem, percent who had dental care

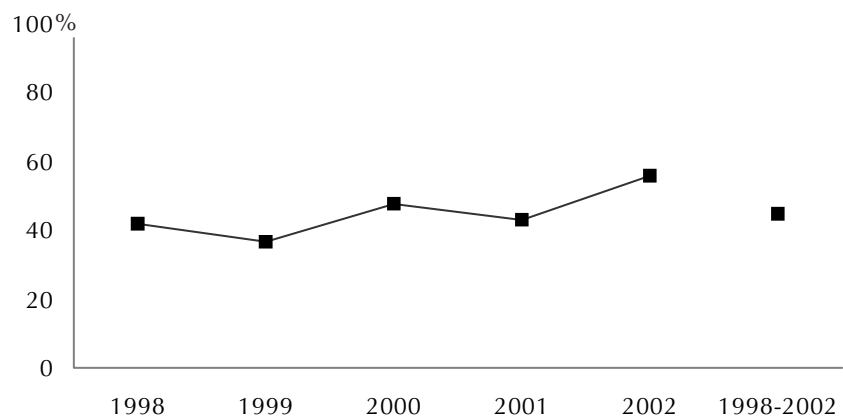


Table 58

Among those with dental problem, % who had dental care		
Year	%	±
1998	42.0	10.4
1999	36.4	7.2
2000	47.6	7.3
2001	43.1	7.3
2002	55.9	7.2
1998-2002	44.9	3.6

Prenatal discussion about oral health

NM PRAMS, years 2001-2002. "Lower" and "Upper" refer to the error margin of the 95% confidence interval; a strikethrough indicates a large margin and the need to use the data with caution. Number of respondents=3161, population size=52072. Sample and weighted numbers, methods and variable definitions are in Appendix. Map of NM districts on Page 8.

Table 59

By maternal characteristic	Percent of mothers who recalled that their dentist or healthcare worker talked about care of the teeth and gums											%	Lower	Upper
	0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50			
All NM mothers												22.5	20.9	24.0
Age														
15-17												29.2	22.1	36.3
18-19												23.9	18.8	29.1
20-24												22.7	19.8	25.5
25-34												20.8	18.5	23.1
35 +												22.5	17.7	27.3
Ethnicity														
Non-Hispanic White												24.2	21.4	27.0
Native American												26.6	22.0	31.1
Hispanic White												20.0	17.9	22.1
Education														
Less than high school												20.5	17.6	23.5
High school												21.4	18.7	24.1
More than high school												25.0	22.4	27.5
Marital status														
Married												22.9	20.8	25.0
Not married												21.9	19.6	24.3
Any previous live birth														
No												25.5	22.8	28.1
Yes												20.7	18.7	22.6
Residence														
Central: District 1 urban												22.3	19.3	25.3
Northeast: District 2												22.8	19.7	26.0
Southwest: District 3												24.6	21.3	27.9
Southeast: District 4												19.5	16.6	22.4
Northwest: District 1 rural												23.4	19.7	27.0
Public assistance														
No												21.5	19.8	23.2
Yes												25.7	22.2	29.1
Payer of prenatal care														
IHS w/wo Medicaid/insurance												30.4	24.0	36.8
Medicaid w/wo insurance; no IHS												20.4	18.2	22.6
Insurance only												26.0	23.3	28.8
None												15.8	12.0	19.7

Oral health services during pregnancy

NM PRAMS, years 2001-2002. "Lower" and "Upper" refer to the error margin of the 95% confidence interval; a strikethrough indicates a large margin and the need to use the data with caution. Number of respondents=3161, population size=52072. Sample and weighted numbers, methods and variable definitions are in Appendix. Map of NM districts on Page 8.

Table 60

By maternal characteristic	Percent of mothers who went to a dentist or dental clinic during pregnancy										%	Lower	Upper
	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90			
All NM mothers											31.7	30.0	33.4
Age													
15-17											30.6	23.3	37.8
18-19											24.5	19.3	29.7
20-24											24.9	22.0	27.9
25-34											35.1	32.3	37.8
35 +											43.3	37.7	49.0
Ethnicity													
Non-Hispanic White											42.7	39.5	45.9
Native American											24.8	20.3	29.3
Hispanic White											25.7	23.4	28.0
Education													
Less than high school											19.5	16.5	22.5
High school											26.3	23.4	29.2
More than high school											45.6	42.7	48.6
Marital status													
Married											37.9	35.5	40.3
Not married											24.5	22.1	27.0
Any previous live birth													
No											34.1	31.2	37.0
Yes											30.2	28.0	32.4
Residence													
Central: District 1 urban											37.0	33.5	40.5
Northeast: District 2											37.0	33.4	40.6
Southwest: District 3											29.6	26.2	33.1
Southeast: District 4											21.3	18.3	24.3
Northwest: District 1 rural											25.5	21.8	29.2
Public assistance													
No											34.0	32.0	36.0
Yes											24.0	20.7	27.4
Payer of prenatal care													
IHS w/wo Medicaid/insurance											27.2	21.1	33.4
Medicaid w/wo insurance; no IHS											22.6	20.3	24.9
Insurance only											50.2	47.0	53.4
None											15.3	11.5	19.1