



ARKANSAS PRAMS NOTES

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System

PREGNANT WOMEN AND ORAL HEALTH CARE, 2007

Oral health care during pregnancy is a big part of effective prenatal care. The American Dental Association has stated that a pregnant woman can safely undergo essential dental treatment during the second trimester and first half of the third trimester. Therefore, any dental emergencies should be dealt with immediately throughout the pregnancy.

Practicing good oral health and seeking timely treatment for dental problems when pregnant are important for the following reasons:

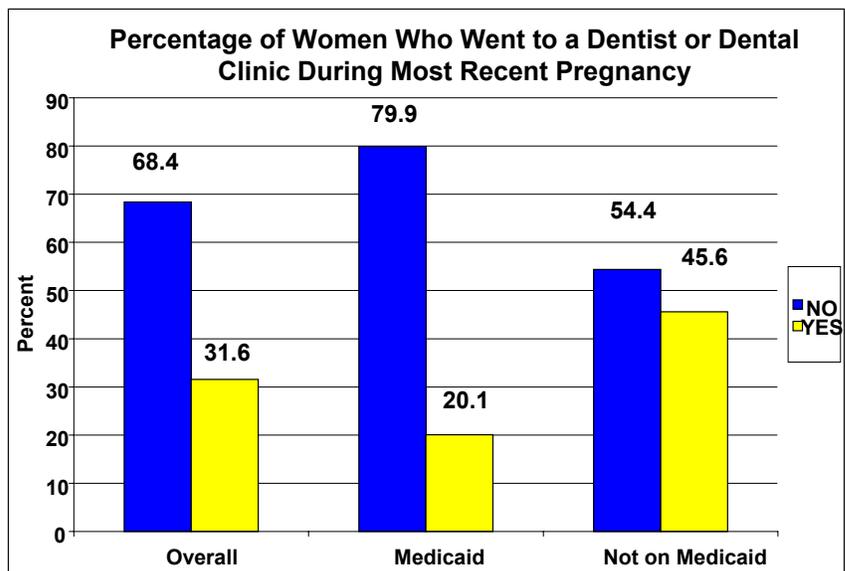
- Hormonal changes during pregnancy increase the risk for oral diseases.
- A possible association exists between periodontal diseases and the risk of having a pre-term or low birth weight baby.
- The bacteria responsible for dental cavities can easily be transmitted from the mother to the infant or toddler.

PREGNANT WOMEN WHO VISITED A DENTIST OR DENTAL CLINIC

- Most women, particularly those on Medicaid, did not go to a dentist or dental clinic during their most recent pregnancy.

The Healthy People 2010 target is for 56% of all persons to visit a dentist within a year. Only 29% of pregnant women visited a dentist during their pregnancy.

Only 31% of women on Medicaid who had a dental problem during pregnancy sought dental care, compared to 63% of women not on Medicaid.



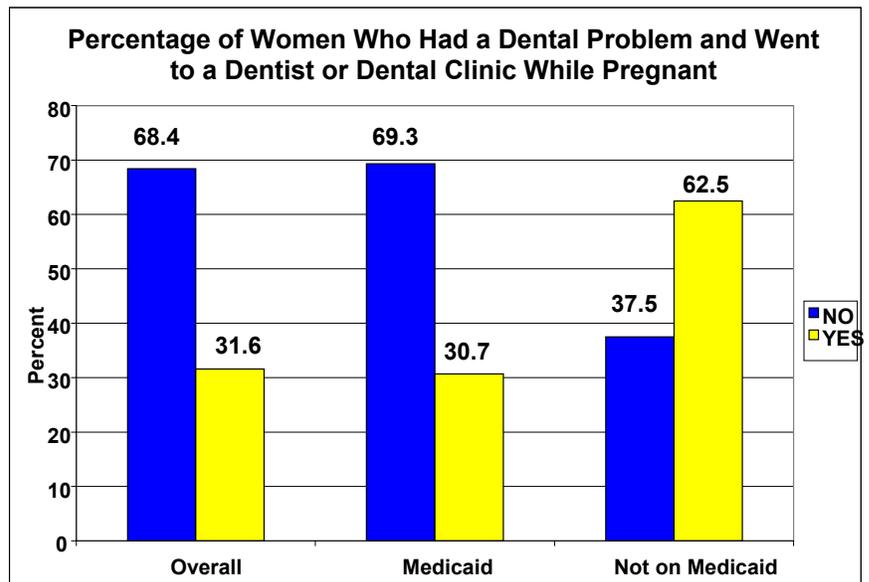
Guidelines for Good Oral Health:

- *Eat a balanced diet*
- *Resist the urge to snack constantly and choose from the five food groups when they do snack*
- *Make appointments for preventive dental visits and exams during pregnancy*

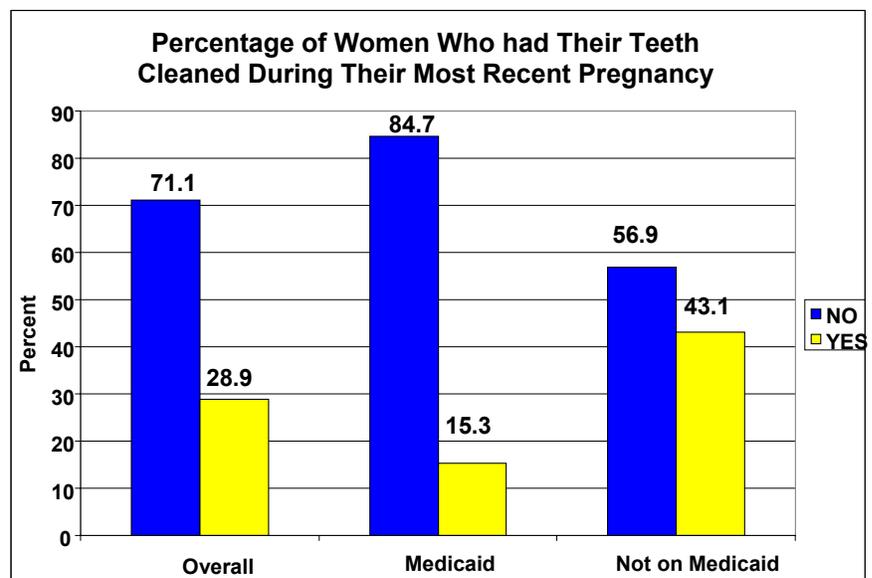
The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is an on-going, population-based surveillance system sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The PRAMS survey is designed to capture information on maternal behaviors and experiences that occur before, during, and after pregnancy among women who had a live birth.

July 2009

- Pregnant women on Medicaid who had a dental problem were less likely than those who were not to see a dentist.



- Women on Medicaid were less likely than women not on Medicaid to have their teeth cleaned during their most recent pregnancy (15% vs. 43%, respectively).



Recommendations:

- Promote the use of guidelines for oral health during pregnancy.
- Expand opportunities for health professional education.
- Educate women on how to improve oral hygiene and access oral health care resources.
- Increase dental insurance coverage for women during pregnancy.
- Integrate oral health risk assessment, education, and referrals as part of routine perinatal and prenatal care.