

Oral Health

June 2009

Introduction

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing household telephone survey of adults aged 18 years and older.¹ This population-based telephone survey is designed to collect data on individual risk behaviors and preventive health practices related to the leading causes of injury, illness, and death. The 2008 Florida BRFSS had 10,874 respondents. The data presented in this report are weighted to be representative of the adult populations in the state.

Background

The word “oral” refers to the mouth, which includes teeth, gums, jawbone, and supporting tissues. The state of a person’s oral health can offer many clues about overall health. For example, heart disease, clogged arteries, and stroke may be linked to oral health. Gum disease has been linked to premature birth. Diabetes increases the risk of gum disease, cavities, tooth loss, dry mouth, and a variety of oral infections. Certain cancers, eating disorders, syphilis, osteoporosis, and substance abuse may make their presence known in the mouth before knowing anything is wrong. Taking good care of oral health can prevent disease in the mouth and improve overall health.² This report examines three key oral health indicators: permanent tooth removal, dental visits, and annual teeth cleaning.

Results

- Forty-eight percent of Florida adults had at least one permanent tooth removed because of tooth decay or gum disease. (Figure 1)
- Sixty-three percent of Florida adults had their teeth cleaned in the past year. (Figure 2)
- Overall, 67% of Florida adults visited a dentist or a dental clinic in the past year. (Figure 3)

Figure 1. Percentage of Adults Who Had Permanent Teeth Removed Because of Tooth Decay or Gum Disease, Florida, 2008

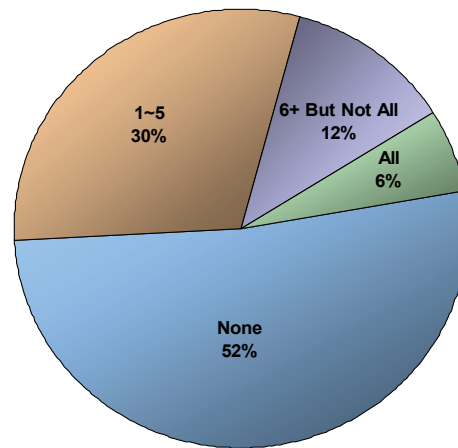
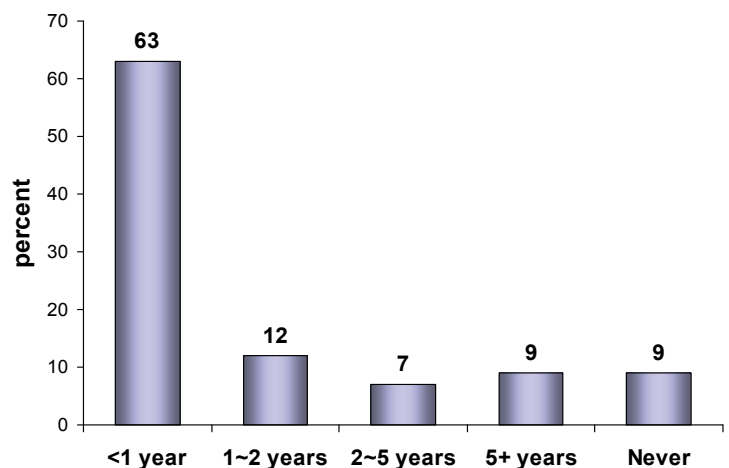


Figure 2. Percentage of Adults Who Had Their Teeth Cleaned, Florida, 2008



The prevalence of adults who visited a dentist or a dental clinic in the past year and the prevalence of adults who had their teeth cleaned in the past year was:

- Significantly higher among non-Hispanic whites compared to non-Hispanic blacks.
- Significantly higher among adults 45- to 64-years-old compared to adults 18- to 44-years-old.
- Significantly higher among adults with a college degree compared to adults without a college degree.
- Significantly higher among adults with an annual family income of \$50,000 or more compared to adults with a family income of less than \$50,000 per year.
- Significantly higher among married adults compared to their unmarried counterparts.

The prevalence of adults who had a permanent tooth removed because of tooth decay or gum disease was:

- Significantly higher among non-Hispanic blacks compared to non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics.
- Significantly higher as age increased.
- Significantly higher among adults without a college degree compared to adults with a college degree.
- Significantly higher among adults with an annual family income of less than \$50,000 compared to adults with a family income of \$50,000 or more per year.

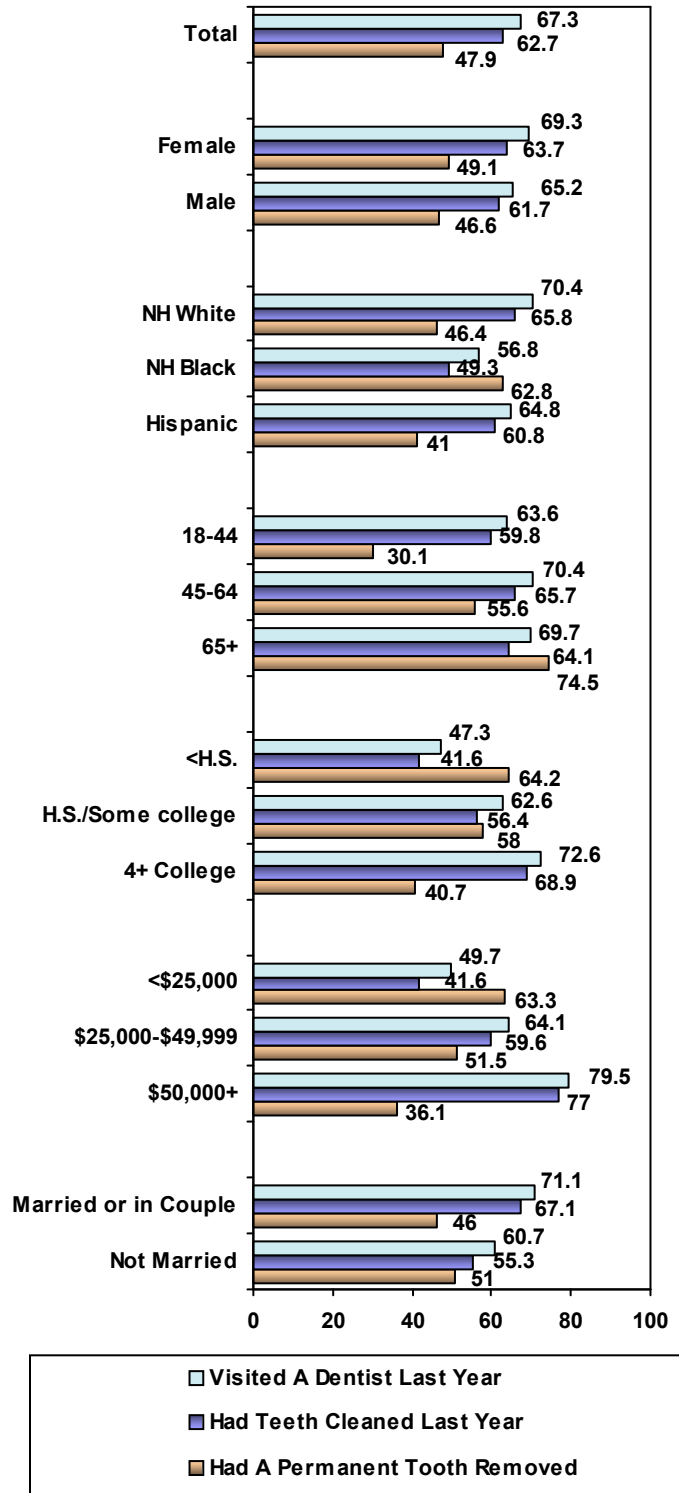
Summary

- The prevalence of adults who visited a dentist or a dental clinic in the past year and the prevalence of adults who had their teeth cleaned in the past year have the same disparity pattern, which was significantly higher among non-Hispanic whites, adults 45- to 64-years-old, adults with a college degree, adults with an annual family income \$50,000 or more, and married adults.
- The prevalence of adults who had a permanent tooth removed because of tooth decay or gum disease was significantly higher among non-Hispanic blacks, among adults without a college degree, among those with a family income of less than \$50,000 per year, and significantly higher as age increased compared to their counterparts.



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Figure 3. Prevalence of Annual Dental Visits, Annual Teeth Cleaning And Permanent Tooth Removed By Demographic Characteristics, BRFSS, Florida, 2008



Selected Citations

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Data*. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2007.
2. <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/dental/DE00001/NSECTIONGROUP=2> (Access: June 25, 2009)