

<b>Indicator W.4. Percentage of Women of Child-Bearing Age (ages 18–44) Who Report Having a Visit to a Dentist or Dental Clinic in the Past Year</b>	
<b>Description:</b>	Percentage of women of child-bearing age (ages 18–44) who report having a visit to a dentist or dental clinic in the past year.
<b>What data source is used?</b>	The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a system of telephone surveys that collect self-reported data about U.S. residents regarding their health-related risk behaviors, chronic health conditions, and use of preventive services. BRFSS is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) along with other federal agencies. The oral health module is a rotating core that is included in the BRFSS questionnaire in even-number years.
<b>Who is the target population?</b>	BRFSS is a state-level survey of U.S. adults ages 18 and older. The target population for this indicator is women ages 18–44.
<b>Which BRFSS question is used for this indicator?</b>	Section 7: Oral Health, Question C07.01: <b>Including all types of dentists, such as orthodontists, oral surgeons, and all other dental specialists, as well as dental hygienists, how long has it been since you last visited a dentist or a dental clinic for any reason?</b> [Response options only read if necessary.] a. Within the past year (anytime less than 12 months ago) b. Within the past 2 years (1 year but less than 2 years ago) c. Within the past 5 years (2 years but less than 5 years ago) d. 5 or more years ago e. Don't know/Not sure (do not read) f. Never (do not read) g. Refused (do not read)
<b>How is the indicator measured?</b>	The indicator is expressed as a percentage [numerator/denominator x 100%]. <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><b>Numerator:</b> The subset of women in the denominator who reported visiting a dentist or dental clinic within the past year</p> <hr style="border: 0.5px solid black;"/> <p><b>Denominator:</b> Number of female respondents, ages 18–44, who answered core question C07.01</p> </div>
<b>Are any BRFSS respondents excluded?</b>	Respondents who are not female, and female respondents ages 45 and older are excluded. Women ages 18–44 who responded to the BRFSS questionnaire overall but did not answer core question 17 (or have responses marked as “don't know/not sure” or “refused”) also are excluded.
<b>What does this indicator measure and why is it important?</b>	This indicator is a measure of <b>utilization</b> of oral health care services by women of child-bearing age. Routine use of oral health care services promotes receipt of preventive services and education about healthy behaviors as well as early identification and treatment of oral disease. <sup>i</sup> Medical and oral health professional organizations recommend that women of child-bearing age have a visit with a dentist before and during pregnancy to get their oral health assessed, obtain preventive services, receive any treatment needed, and receive guidance about good eating and oral hygiene practices. <sup>ii</sup>
<b>Are there any limitations to this indicator?</b>	BRFSS data are self-reported and may be subject to various types of response and measurement bias, such as inaccurate recall or responses that are influenced by what is “socially acceptable” rather than what the “true” answer would be.
<b>Where can I get more information?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional information about the BRFSS survey is available from <a href="https://www.cdc.gov">CDC</a>.</li> </ul>

<sup>i</sup>Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2011. [Improving Access to Oral Health Care for Vulnerable and Underserved Populations](#). Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.

<sup>ii</sup>Oral Health Care During Pregnancy Expert Workgroup. 2012. [Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: A National Consensus Statement](#). Washington, DC: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center.