

Oral Health: Dental Visits in Vermont

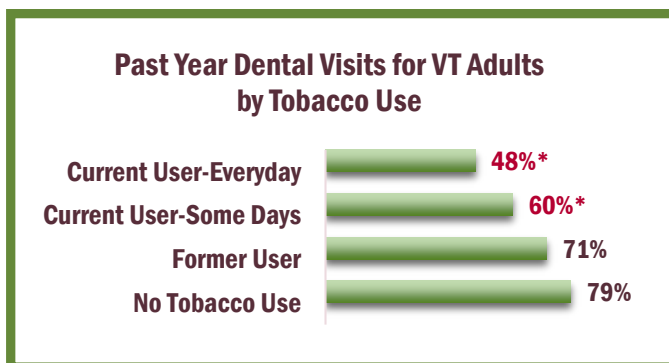


ORAL HEALTH AND 3-4-50

3-4-50 is a simple concept to help us grasp the reality that **3 health behaviors** contribute to **4 chronic diseases** that are the cause of more than **50 percent of deaths in Vermont**. These same health behaviors and chronic diseases are also associated with poor oral health. Regular dental visits may lead to early detection of decay, gum disease and oral cancer, which can reduce the risk of more expensive dental procedures and improve overall health. Vermonters who use tobacco, are obese or have a chronic disease are less likely to visit the dentist.

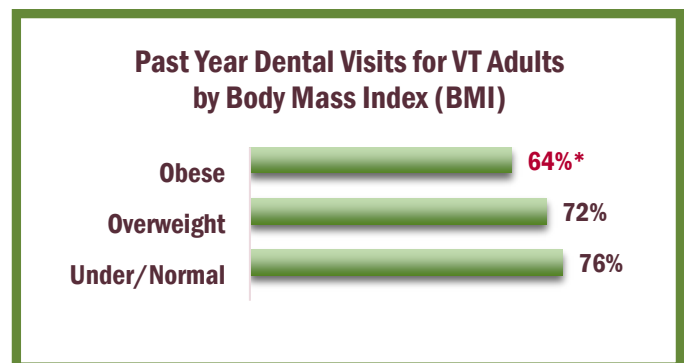
RISK BEHAVIORS AND DENTAL VISITS

- Current smokers were less likely to have visited the dentist in the past year than those who did not use tobacco. Smokers are more likely to develop oral cancer, which could be detected by a dentist.
- Vermonters who were obese were less likely to have visited the dentist in the last year. Poor diet and drinking sugar-sweetened beverages have been linked to tooth decay and are risk factors for obesity.



(* notes statistical difference, compared to no tobacco use

Data Source: 2014 BRFSS



(* notes statistical difference, compared to under/normal weight

Data Source: 2014 BRFSS

CHRONIC DISEASE AND DENTAL VISITS

- Vermonters with cardiovascular disease, diabetes or prediabetes, and lung disease were less likely to visit the dentist in the past year than those without the chronic disease.
- Research shows an association between chronic disease and tooth loss. People with chronic disease may experience oral health complications, such as infected gums, and chronic disease treatments can result in other dental problems. For example, a common side effect of chemotherapy treatment for cancer is dry mouth, which can lead to tooth decay.

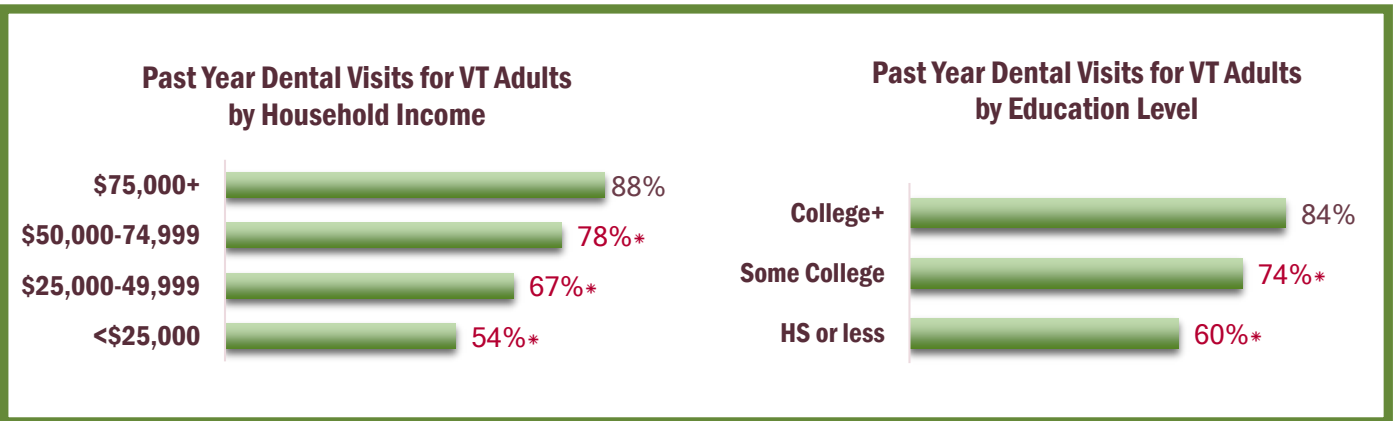
Past Year Dental Visits for VT Adults by Chronic Disease

	With Chronic Disease	Without Chronic Disease
Cardiovascular Disease	56%*	73%
Diabetes or Prediabetes	59%*	73%
Lung Disease (Asthma/COPD)	64%*	73%
Cancer	70%	71%

(* notes statistical difference, compared to those without the chronic disease) Data Source: 2014 BRFSS

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND DENTAL VISITS

Vermont adults of lower socioeconomic status (lower income levels and less education) reported fewer dental visits compared to adults of higher socioeconomic status. They were also more likely to report tobacco use, lack of physical activity, poor diet and having been diagnosed with a chronic disease.



(* notes statistical difference)

Data Source: 2014 BRFSS

For questions related to the data presented here, email 3-4-50@vermont.gov. To learn more about oral health and chronic disease, see the detailed data brief titled, *Oral Health: Risk Behaviors, Chronic Disease and Oral Health*.