

# Teeth Cleaning During Pregnancy in Texas PRAMS 2012-2016



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## Background

Oral health plays an important role in healthy pregnancy outcomes for both mother and infant.<sup>1</sup> According to recommendations from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), dental work, x-rays, and dental hygiene appointments are safe for pregnant women.<sup>2</sup> Despite the recommendations, there exists dental utilization disparities among pregnant women. It is important to understand the prevalence of teeth cleaning during pregnancy, especially within key demographics and maternal characteristics to better understand and address these disparities.

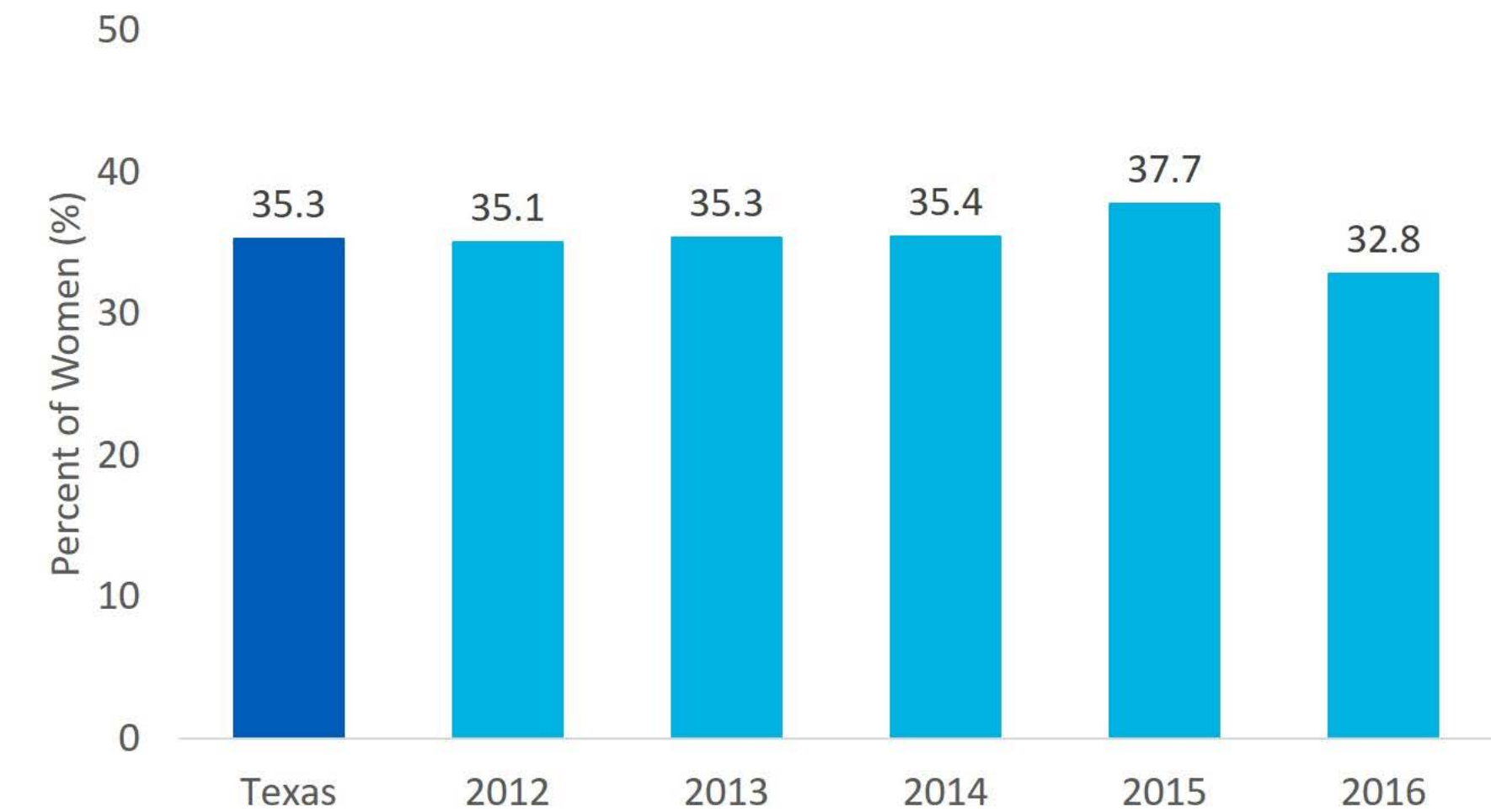
The purpose of this project was to examine potential teeth cleaning disparities of women during pregnancy in Texas and to support data-driven actions to increase teeth cleaning for women during pregnancy.

## Methods

Combined Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) survey data from 2012-2016 were used in this analysis. All analyses were conducted using SAS 9.4 for complex survey analysis procedures. Chi-square tests were used to assess statistical differences in risk factors. Percent of women reporting teeth cleaning during pregnancy was determined overall, by survey years (2012-2016), and by significant demographics. Additionally, the prevalence of select maternal behavior risk factors, select stressful life events, and reported dental care was determined by status of reported teeth cleaning during pregnancy for this project.

## Results

Figure 1: Percent of Women Reporting Teeth Cleaning During Pregnancy by Survey Year, PRAMS 2012-2016



## Results (Continued)

Figure 2: Dental Teeth Cleaning During Pregnancy by Select Demographics, PRAMS 2012-2016

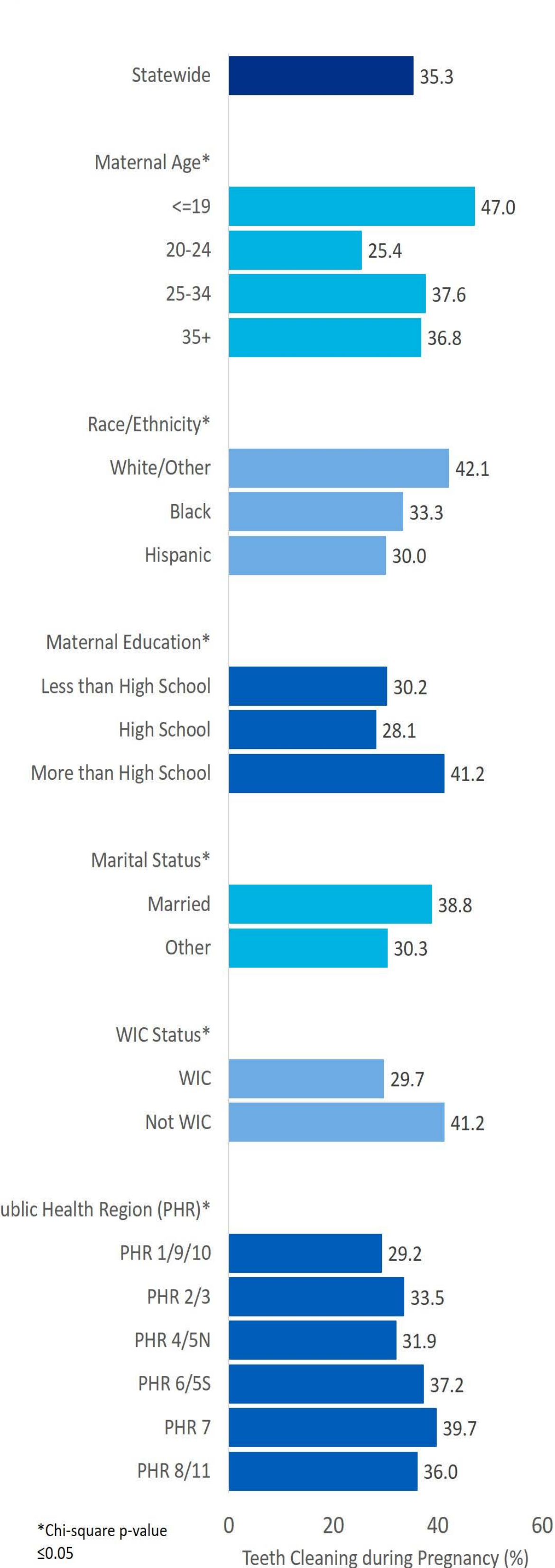


Figure 3: Select Risk Factors by Teeth Cleaning Status During Pregnancy, PRAMS 2012-2016

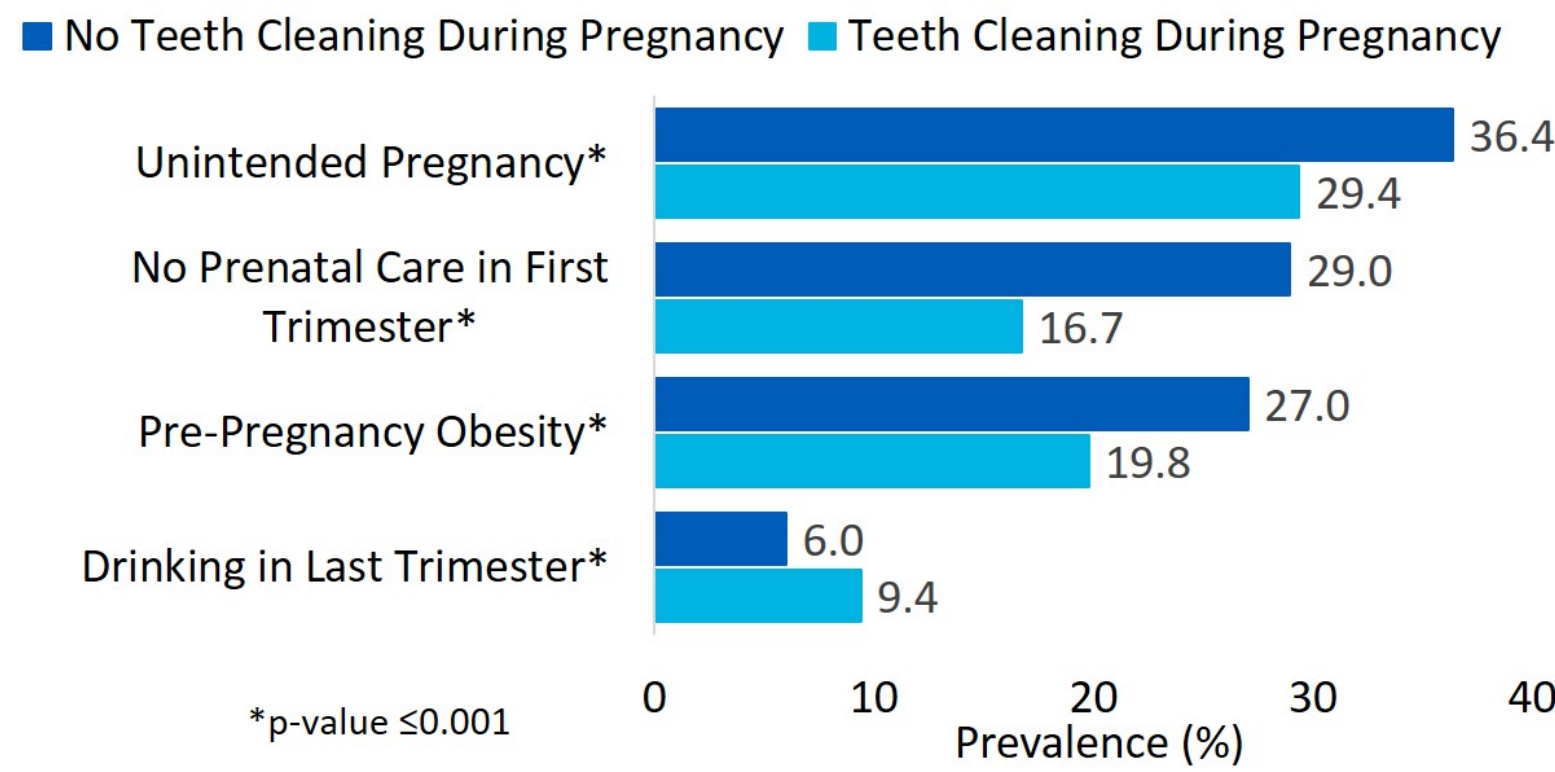


Figure 4: Select Stressful Life Events by Teeth Cleaning Status During Pregnancy, PRAMS 2012-2016

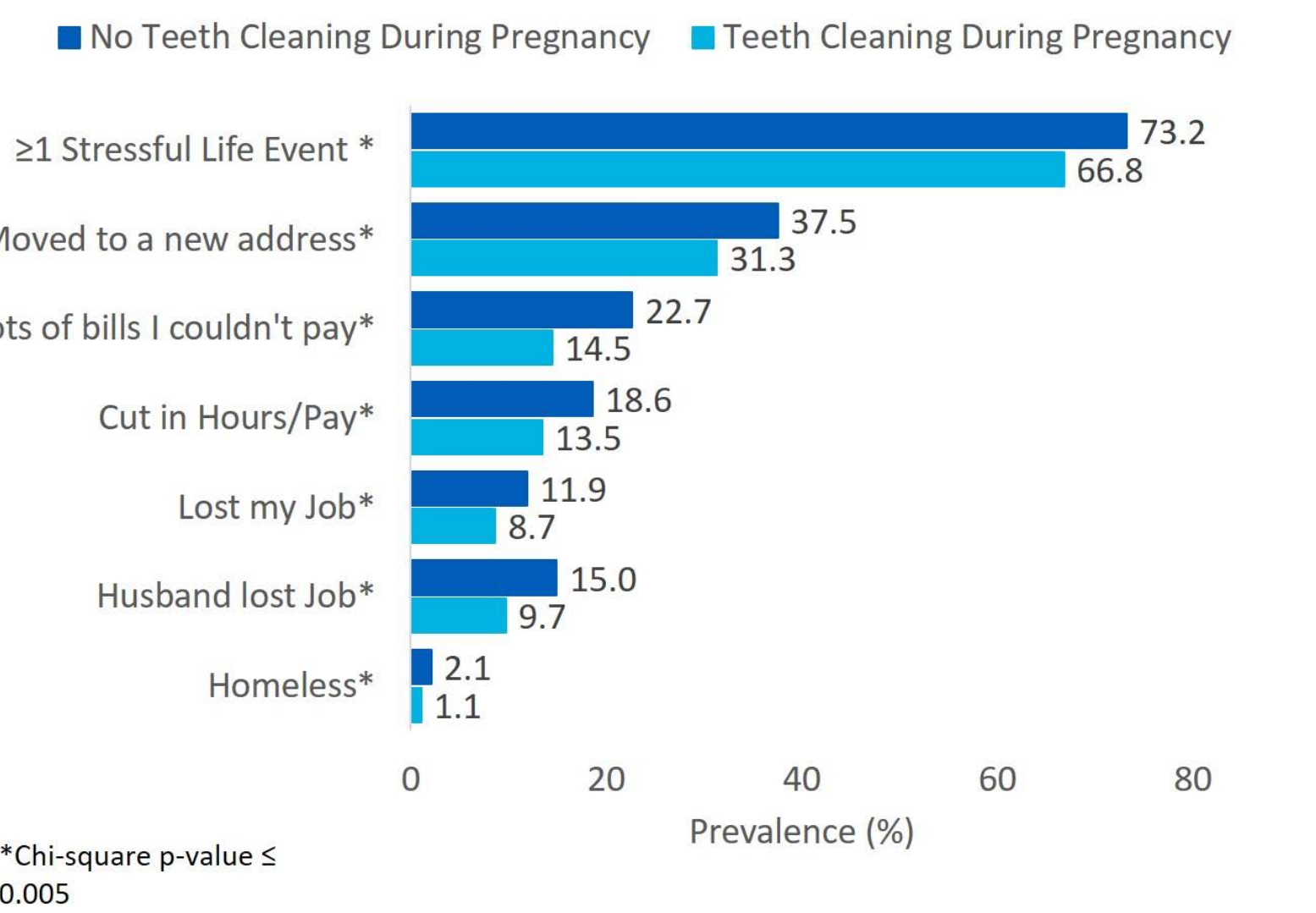
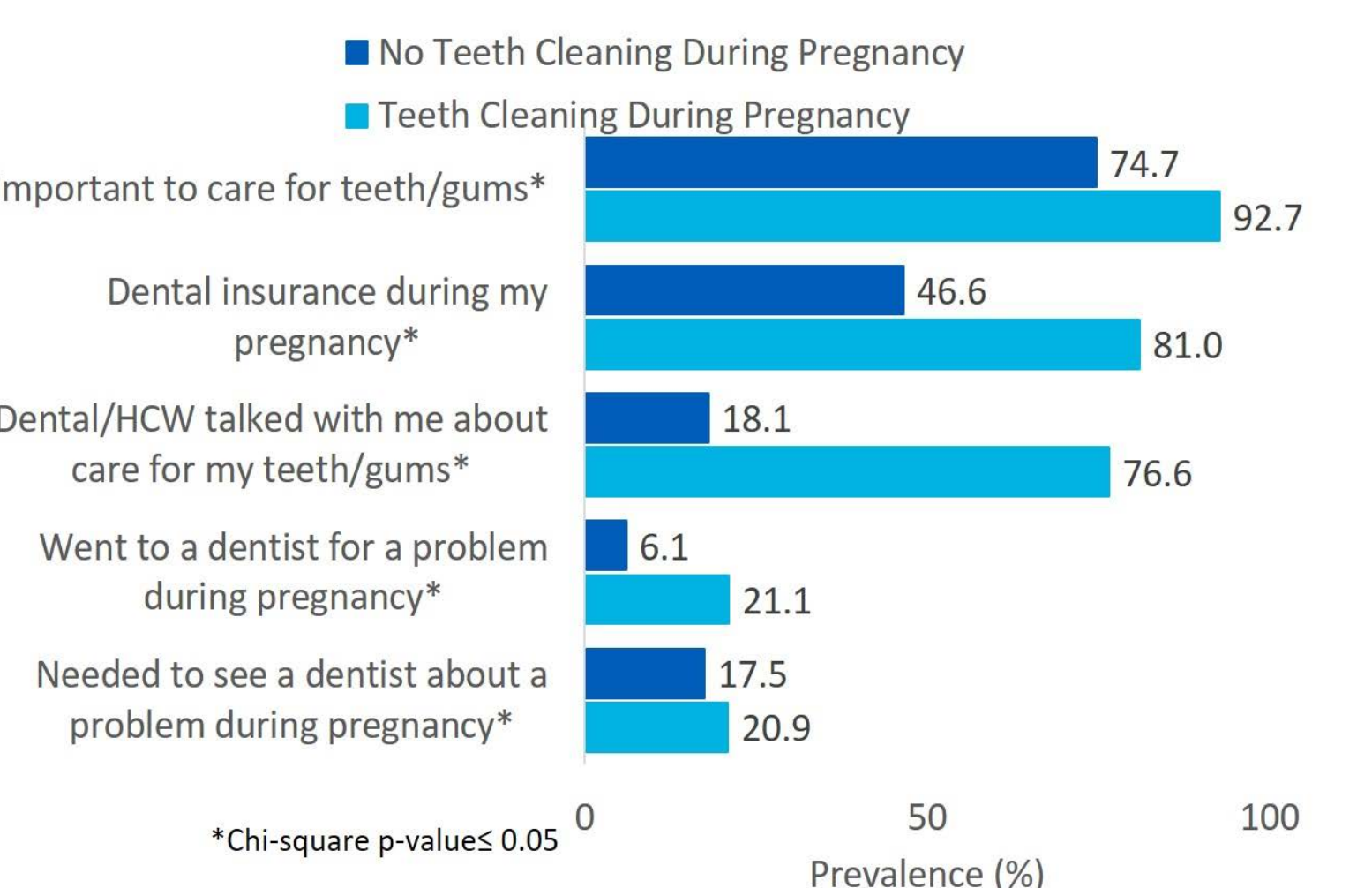


Figure 5: Reported Dental Care by Teeth Cleaning Status During Pregnancy, PRAMS 2012-2016



## Discussion

Overall, 35.3 percent of Texas women had a teeth cleaning during pregnancy (Figure 1). This prevalence remained stable from 2012 to 2016. Texas women age 20 to 24 years, who are Hispanic (30.0 percent), who are not married, or who are on the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) have a lower prevalence of teeth cleaning during pregnancy than their counterparts. Additionally, women who live in Public Health Region (PHR) 7 (Central Texas) are more likely to have had a teeth cleaning during pregnancy compared to women in any other PHR in Texas (Figure 2). Texas women who did not get their teeth cleaned during their most recent pregnancy are significantly more likely to also report an unintended pregnancy, to not have prenatal care in the first trimester of their pregnancy, or to be obese prior to pregnancy than women who did get their teeth cleaned during pregnancy (Figure 3). Texas women who had a teeth cleaning during their most recent pregnancy were significantly less likely to report having one or more stressful life events 12 months before pregnancy than women who did not have a teeth cleaning during pregnancy (Figure 4). Overall 18.7 percent of women reported needing to see a dentist for a problem during pregnancy, whereas only 11.3 percent of Texas women went to see a dentist for a problem during pregnancy. Texas women who did not get their teeth cleaned during pregnancy are significantly less likely to know about the importance of care for their teeth or gums, have dental insurance during their pregnancy, talk to a dentist or health care worker about caring for their teeth or gums, go to a dentist for a problem during pregnancy, or see a dentist about a problem during their pregnancy than women who did have their teeth cleaned during their most recent pregnancy (Figure 5).

## Conclusion

Texas pregnant women of lower socioeconomic status, who exhibit certain pregnancy risk factors, or who have recently endured stressful life events are less likely than other women to have their teeth cleaned while they are pregnant.

## Public Health Implications

Both dental and medical communities should educate and counsel pregnant women on the importance and safety of dental care during pregnancy, especially pregnant women facing disparities, to ensure oral health.

## References

- Amini, H. Casamassino, P.S. "Prenatal dental care: A review." *General dentistry*. May 2010.
- ACOG. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, August 2013, Vol. 122:2, pp. 417- 422.