



Delta Dental of Illinois 2014 Oral Health and Well-Being Survey



Smart plans for smart mouths.

 **DELTA DENTAL®**

Shining a Spotlight on Oral Health's Connection to Overall Well-Being

As the leading dental carrier in the United States, Delta Dental of Illinois covers the smiles of 2 million individuals, employees and family members nationwide. We know firsthand the importance of oral health and its connection to overall well-being.

To shine a spotlight on these important topics, we commissioned a public opinion poll. Working with Morpace, an independent market research firm, we surveyed 151 adults across Illinois. This sample size yields a margin of error of ± 8 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

We asked Illinoisans about their opinions and habits related to oral health. We explored topics both serious and light-hearted. And, we analyzed the results to uncover connections between oral health and overall well-being.

Here's what we found:



Good oral health is strongly linked with overall well-being.



Dental coverage contributes to dental visits, which are linked to good oral health. Illinoisans' dental habits, including regular dental visits and flossing, could be improved.



Oral health issues and educational opportunities persist today.



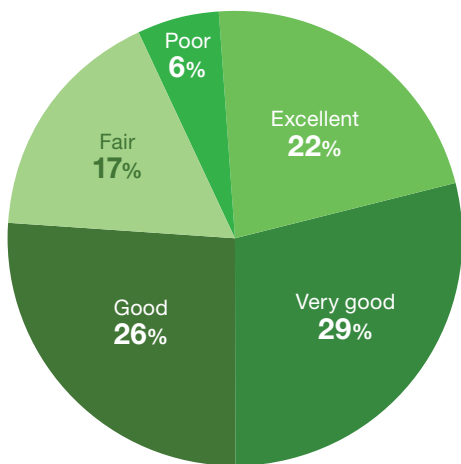
Oral Health and Well-Being



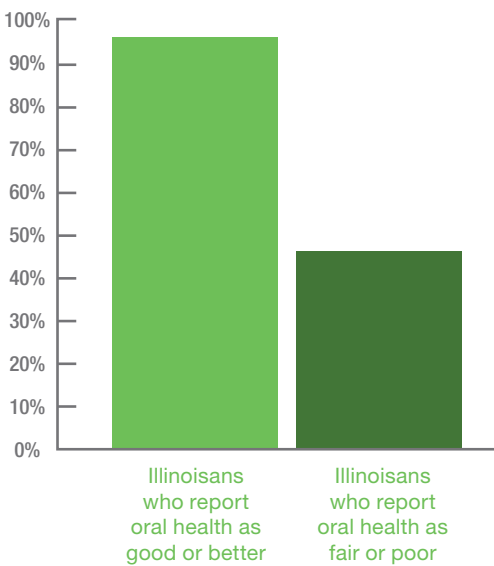
Illinoisans report their oral health as strong. In fact, three of four Illinoisans (77 percent) rate their oral health as good, very good or excellent – about the same number (84 percent) rate their overall well-being similarly.

Further analysis of the data suggests a significant correlation between strong oral health and strong overall well-being. Illinois residents are more than twice as likely to report their **overall well-being** as good or better if they report their **oral health** as good or better.

Overall Oral Health



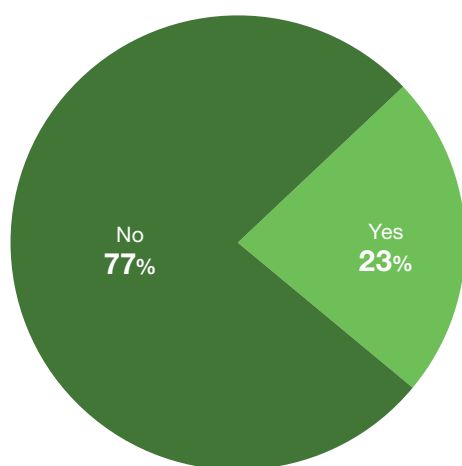
% Reporting Overall Well-Being as Good or Better



Unresolved Oral Health Issues

While most Illinoisans report good oral health, about one of four Illinoisans (23 percent) report unresolved oral health issues. Those with issues cite cost (43 percent) and fear of the procedure (19 percent) as top reasons for not having treatment.

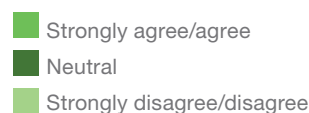
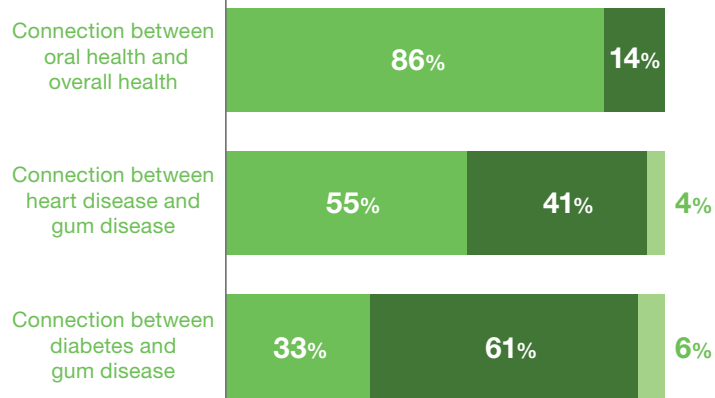
Have Unresolved Oral Health Issues



Oral Health and Overall Health Connection

Illinoisans understand a general connection between oral health and overall health, but they lack understanding of specific connections. For example, just over half of adults (55 percent) realize there's a connection between heart disease and gum disease, and only 33 percent are aware of the connection between diabetes and gum disease.

Agreement with:





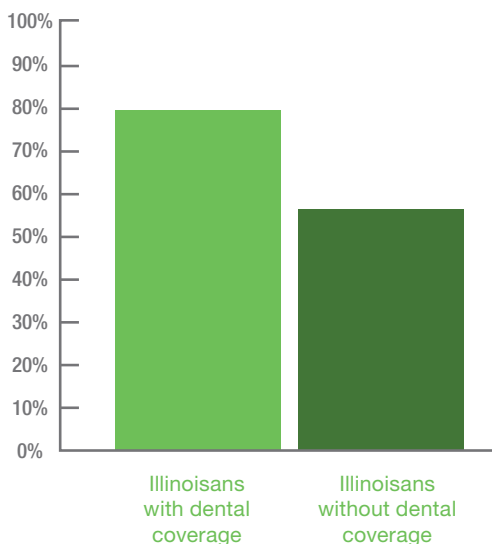
Dental Visits in America



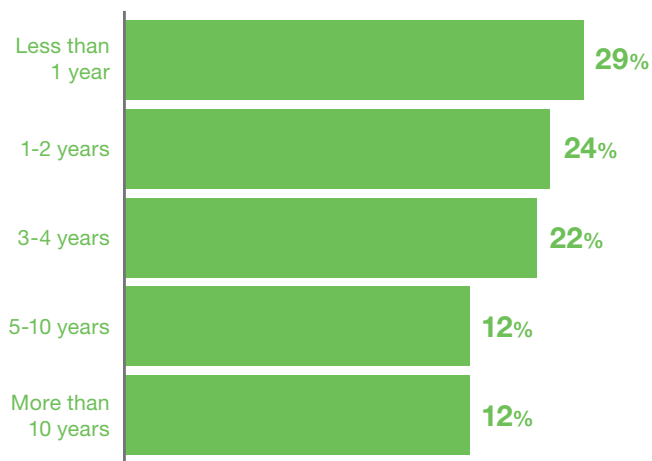
Two of three Illinoisans (67 percent) visit the dentist at least once a year. Americans with dental coverage are much more likely to have regular dental visits than those who lack coverage.

While dental visit habits are generally good, most Americans admit to taking time off from regular checkups at some point in their lives. In fact, almost half of Illinoisans (46 percent) have gone three or more years without seeing a dentist.

% Visiting the Dentist at Least Once a Year



Longest Time Gone Without Seeing a Dentist

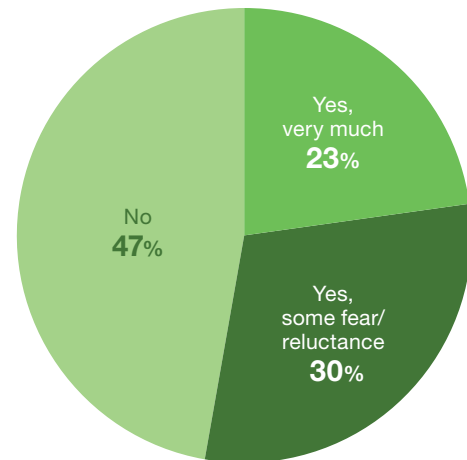


Note: The sum of the non-rounded numbers for responses is 100 percent.

Dental Anxiety

About five of 10 Illinoisans (53 percent) indicate some fear or reluctance in visiting the dentist. Of those who say they have fear or reluctance, a bad past experience or concerns about additional care are most frequently cited. Still, despite the fear or reluctance that many Illinoisans feel about visiting the dentist, more feel refreshed (63 percent) than relieved (37 percent) after a dental visit.

Fear/Reluctance to Visit Dentist?





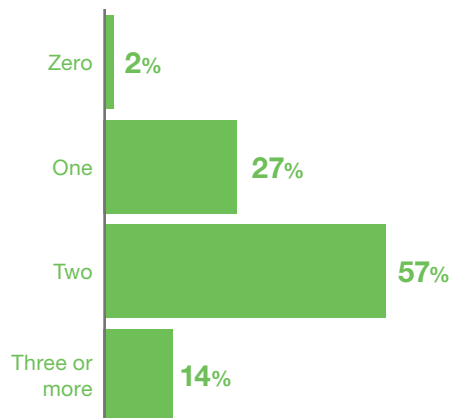
Dental Habits at Home



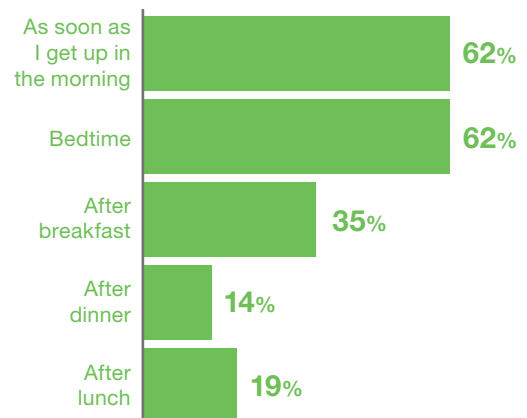
Most Illinoisans brush their teeth twice or more a day. Still, more than one-fourth of Illinoisans (27 percent) do not, which means they aren't brushing enough.

Six of 10 Illinoisans brush their teeth as soon as they get up in the morning and at bedtime.

Frequency of Brushing
(Times Per Day)

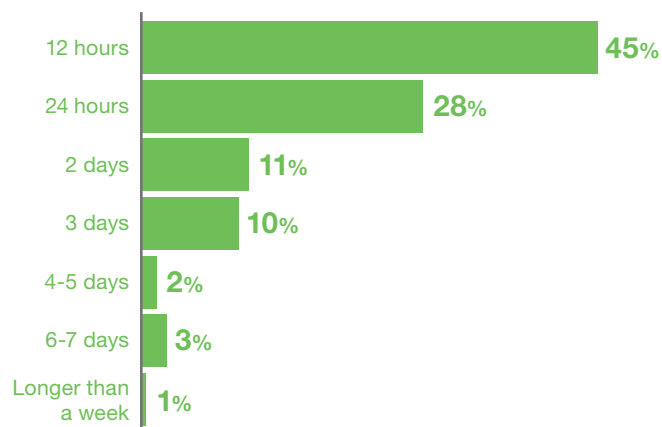


Times of Day Typically
Brush Teeth



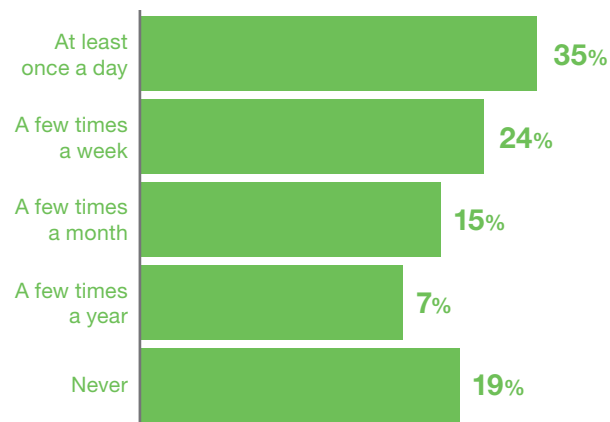
More than one of four Illinoisans (27 percent) has gone two or more days without brushing their teeth in the past year.

Longest Gone Without Brushing (Past Year)



Only three of 10 Illinoisans (35 percent) floss at least once daily (the recommended frequency), and 19 percent never floss.

Frequency of Flossing



Dental Coverage is Linked with Overall Well-Being



Dental Coverage



Adults with dental coverage are **50 percent** more likely to visit the dentist at least once a year.



Dental Visits



Adults who visit the dentist once a year are **37 percent** more likely to report good or better oral health.



Oral Health



Adults who report good oral health are almost **twice as likely** to report good or better overall well-being.



Overall Well-Being



It's the Smile

According to the Delta Dental of Illinois Oral Health and Well-Being survey, a smile is the most important physical feature that contributes to a person's attractiveness. And, seven of 10 Illinoisans (70 percent) say a smile has some bearing on a person's overall success.

Seven of 10 Illinoisans (70 percent) say they like their smile, and a third (34 percent) wouldn't change a thing about it. The fact that most Illinoisans like their smiles is a good sign, and Delta Dental of Illinois is committed to providing access to great oral health care and education so Illinoisans can continue to feel good about their own personal smiles.

For more oral health information, visit YourOralHealthHub.com.



Smart plans for smart mouths.

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