

Publication

Dental care behaviour in Switzerland

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Improvements in oral health are changing the requirements for oral health care provision. This study assessed the frequency and major reason of dental visits and personal oral hygiene measures in Switzerland, and temporal trends in visit frequency. The number of dental visits in the previous twelve months, the reason for these visits, and the prevalence of oral hygiene measures were quantified from weighted data from the 2012 Swiss Health Survey. The frequency of dental visits in 2012 was compared with previous surveys (1992-2007). Almost two thirds of subjects reported visiting a dentist and almost half had visited a dental hygienist in the previous twelve months. Voluntary (33%) or recall check-ups (25%) were the most common reasons for the last dental visit across age groups. Treatment needs including caries/filling/endodontic treatment (10%), crowns/FDP/RDP/implants (8%), toothache (5%), extraction (5%), periodontal complaints (2%), or orthodontic appliances (2%) were more heterogeneously distributed across age groups. One in ten subjects had dental implants; prevalence increased with increasing age as did the number of missing teeth. Use of interdental cleaning devices and frequent tooth brushing were more common among subjects with few or no missing teeth and among subjects with higher versus lower income or education. Oral health awareness varied with a higher awareness in women than in men and in subjects with higher versus lower income or education. The prevalence of dental implants and dental hygienist's visits has increased in Switzerland since 2002, but oral hygiene measures remained stable.

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