

2018 Fact Sheet: Improve oral health

This fact sheet is a summary of progress made in year four of the 2015-2019 State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). Oral health seems to be improving. Achievements within the priority area to improve oral health include:

- A significant decrease in the number of third graders with cavities in their permanent teeth. (7.6 percent in 2017 compared to 15.5 percent in 2012.) System-wide efforts ensure children see a dentist regularly. System-wide efforts are also ensuring that children receive preventive oral health services in the dentist office or community setting (e.g. schools, WIC clinics, Head Start programs, etc.). There is wide acceptance of the message that children should have their first dental visit by age one. There is evidence in an increase in children who receive a preventive dental visit within their first two years. (49.2 percent in 2017 compared to 43.9 percent in 2016.)
- More low-income students have access to dental sealant programs in elementary and middle schools. This is largely due to the CCO financial incentive metric for dental sealants and the ability to coordinate statewide efforts through the mandatory certification program for school dental sealant programs.

Figure 1.

Oral health among children*

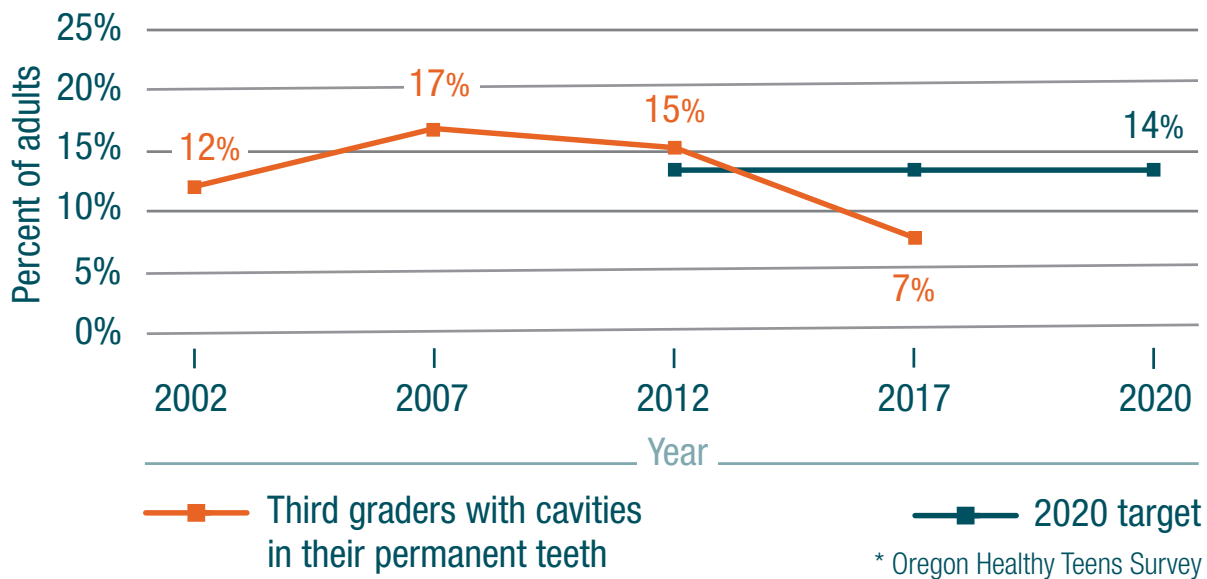
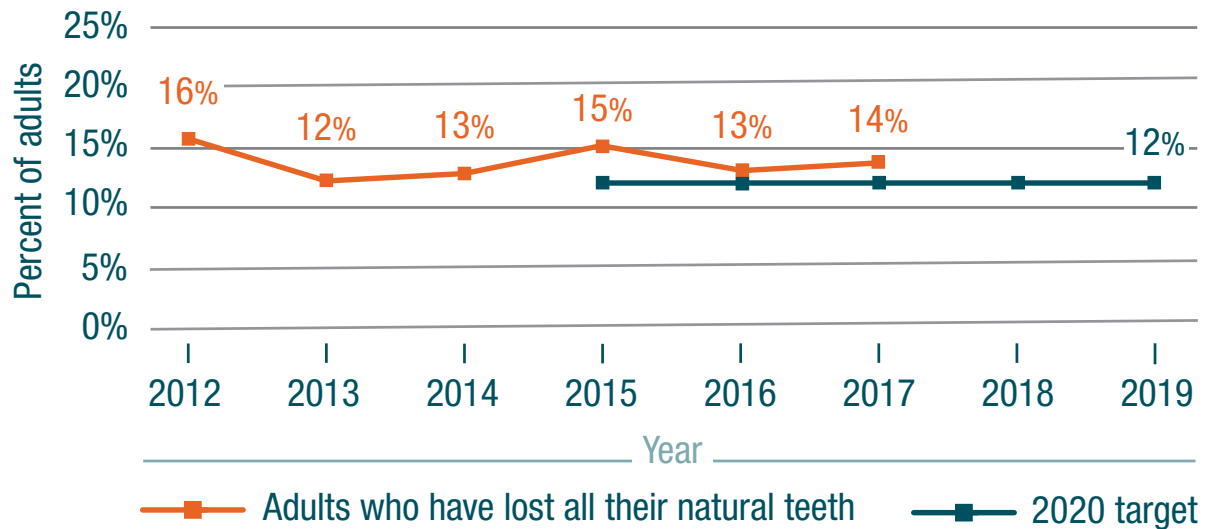


Figure 2.

Oral health among adults*



* Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

Challenges

The following challenges may affect the ability of the state to meet goals and achieve priority targets by the end of 2019:

- In Oregon, only one in five people receive fluoride in their water. Oregon has the third lowest number of fluoridated community water systems in the country. Community water fluoridation is an evidence-based practice recommended by:
 - » [Community Preventive Services Task Force \(CPSTF\), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
 - » [Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors \(ASTDD\)](#), and
 - » [Healthy People 2020](#).

Research strongly shows that fluoride reduces dental cavities and disease across the entire population, regardless of age, race or ethnicity, insurance coverage, access to a dentist, or the ability to pay for care.

You can find complete information, including progress made on specific interventions and strategies online at www.healthoregon.org/ship.