

Statistics on Dental Health 2020

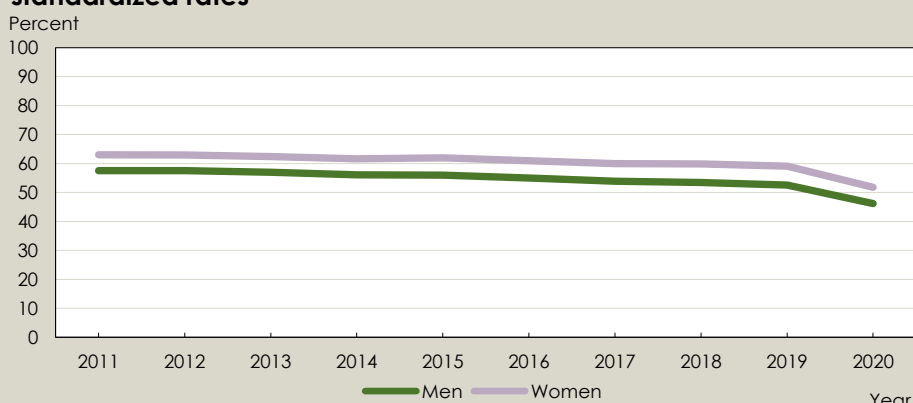
3.7 million individuals in the adult population, 24 years or older, sought dental care in 2020. This is the lowest recorded number of individuals since the national registration of dental visits began in 2009. The decline should be seen in the light of covid19 pandemic-related recommendations and restrictions. Statistics on dental health showed that for older people, large differences in dental health can be seen, measured in the number of remaining teeth, depending on whether the dental visit was an emergency visit or not.

Fewer Visits Due to the Pandemic

3,660,000 individuals from the adult population, 24 years or older, sought dental care in 2020. Of these, 1,712,000 were men and 1,948,000 women. This is the lowest recorded number of individuals since the national registration of dental visits began in 2009. The sharp decline compared to 2019 is largely explained by the global outbreak of covid-19 and the societal measures aimed at curbing further spread of infection. The World Health Organization (WHO) defined the spread of covid-19 as a pandemic in March 2020.

The year 2020 shows a striking lower number of visits compared to previous years, which ended a long term gradual decrease in the number of visits. Figure 1 shows the proportion of men and women who sought dental care during the period 2011-2020, taking into account the size and age structure of the population. The graph also shows that women seek dental care to a greater extent than men and that the difference between women and men is consistent over time.

Figure 1. Proportion of individuals in population, 24 years of age or older, who have visited the Dental Healthcare 2011-2020, age-standardized rates*

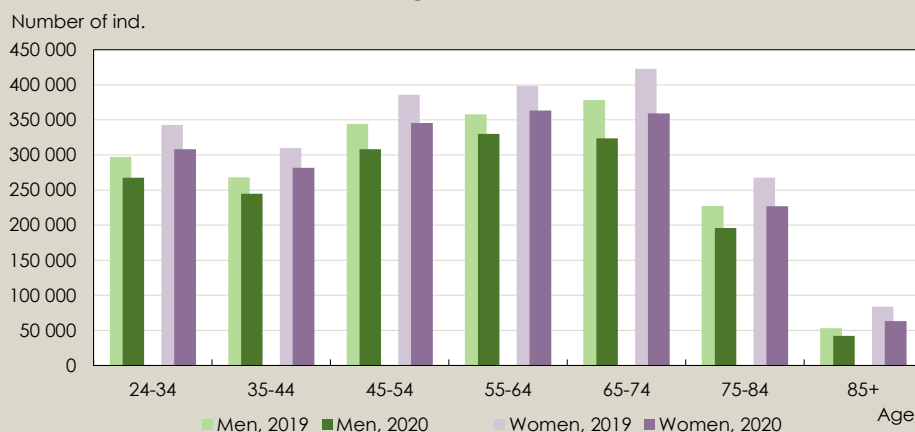


* Age-standardized using the population 2020

Source: The Swedish Dental Health Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

The pattern of fewer visits is shown in both men and women and for all ages in the population. The number of people who sought dental care during 2020 and 2019 is shown by age groups in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Number of individuals who have visited The Dental Healthcare in 2020 and 2019, by sex and age



Source: The Swedish Dental Health Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

The largest decrease, in the number of individuals, is seen in the age group 65-74. In this age group, 55,000 fewer men and 63,000 fewer women visited dental care in 2020 compared with the previous year. This corresponds to a percentage decrease of about 15% for both sexes. However, the largest percentage change is found in the highest age group with people older than 85 years. For this age group, the annual decrease is 24.3% for women and 21.1% for men.

More information on the effects of the pandemic

The National Board of Health and Welfare has published a number of in-depth reports on the effects of pandemics on dental visits. You can download the reports here:

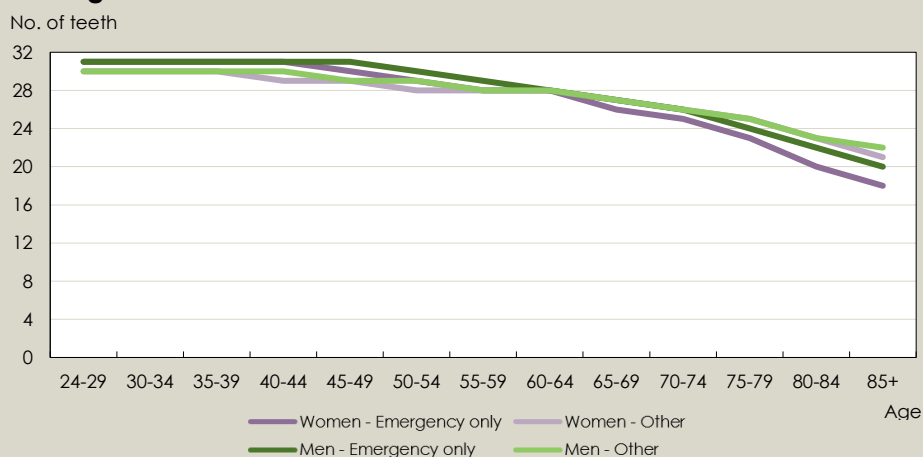
www.socialstyrelsen.se/coronavirus-covid-19/socialstyrelsens-roll-och-uppdrag/analys-och-utveckling/

Still Inequalities in Dental Health

Figure 3 shows the median of the number of remaining teeth after two types of visits - only emergency visits during the last three years and other visits, respectively (which includes basic examinations and planned visits).

For people under the age of 40, the median number of remaining teeth is 31 at emergency visits and 30 at other visits. For people older than 75, the median is 25 or fewer remaining teeth. For younger age groups, the median of the number of remaining teeth is higher during emergency visits compared with other visits. For older age groups, the pattern is the opposite; the emergency visits show lower median values than other visits.

Figure 3. Median of number of remaining teeth 2020, by type of visit and age



Source: The Swedish Dental Health Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

There are several possible explanations for the patterns described above. One of these may be that younger people with dental health problems visit dental care more regularly. They thus generally have poorer dental health than those who do not visit the dental care regularly. For the older adults, emergency visits are more often related to poor dental health compared with those who visit dental care more regularly. This mainly applies to women older than 65 years and for men from 75 years of age.

Statistical terms related to dental health

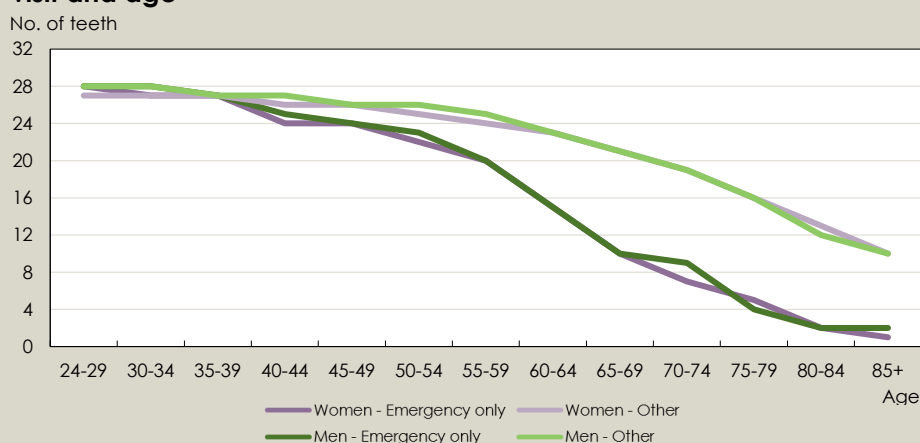
According to Swedish law, the main objective for the dental health care system is good dental health and dental care on equal terms for the entire population.

A **remaining tooth** is a tooth that has a natural root, is partially erupted or has a visible tooth root. This also includes wisdom teeth. The number of remaining teeth is a rough but robust measure of dental health. Depending on whether the wisdom teeth are erupted or have visible tooth root, a person can have up to 32 remaining teeth.

The **mean** value is the sum of the values in the current group divided by the group's total number. The **median** is the middle value in the group as the observed values are sorted in ascending order. Unlike the mean, the median is not affected by extreme values. The median is the same as the 50th percentile while the **10th percentile** is located at the edge of the distribution. The 10th percentile corresponds to the value at which 10 percent of the observed and sorted values are equal or lower while 90 percent are equal or higher.

Figure 4 shows the 10th percentile of the number of remaining teeth reported by type of visit. Small differences are observed for the lower age groups, but for older ages a clear pattern can be seen with fewer remaining teeth for those who have only made emergency visits. For example, the 10th percentile for women and men who are 65-69 years and who only visited emergency dental care have 10 remaining teeth. Compared with 21 remaining teeth for those of the same age group who have not sought emergency dental care.

Figure 4. 10:th percentile of number of remaining teeth 2020, by type of visit and age



Source: The Swedish Dental Health Register, The National Board of Health and Welfare

More information

You can find more tables, graphs and information here (in Swedish, but with English list of terms, select *Tillhörande dokument och bilagor*):
www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/statistikammen/tandhalsa

If you want to use our statistical database (in Swedish):
www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/statistikdatabasen

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