

The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is a survey of women who recently gave birth that asks about their experiences and behaviors before, during and shortly after their pregnancy. Vermont has participated in PRAMS since 2001. This report presents highlights for 2012 Vermont births, organized by topic area. Further information is available upon request.

New Indicators

The 2012-2015 version of Vermont PRAMS provides several new data items on a range of topics. New indicators are interspersed within the topics below, and are in **bold, green text**.

Preconception Health & Family Planning

- In the year prior to pregnancy, 28% of mothers were dieting to lose weight, and over half (55%) exercised 3 or more times per week.
- During a visit to a health care provider during the 12 months before getting pregnant:
 - 15% were checked for diabetes.
 - 25% were checked for high blood pressure.
 - 25% were checked for depression or anxiety.
- 53% were not taking a multivitamin during the month prior to pregnancy, while 34% took one every day. The remaining 13% took multivitamins, but not every day of the week.
 - Among women whose pregnancies were unplanned, 77% were not taking a multivitamin.
- 40% of births resulted from unintended pregnancies. (Note: starting in 2012, the PRAMS questionnaire includes “not sure” as an option about desired timing for pregnancy. Unless otherwise noted, Vermont PRAMS includes “not sure” responses in the unintended category.)
- 49% of mothers who were not trying to become pregnant used a method of birth control.

Prenatal Care & Childbirth Preparation

- 86% of women talked to a healthcare worker about how much weight to gain during pregnancy.
 - 83% talked about healthy foods to eat while pregnant and 85% discussed exercise during pregnancy.
 - 35% discussed programs or resources for healthy weight gain during pregnancy.
- 88% discussed breastfeeding with a health care worker at a prenatal visit.
- 80% discussed prenatal or postnatal depression
- 64% talked about getting tested for HIV.
- 55% discussed seatbelt use during pregnancy.
- 50% discussed physical abuse by partners.
- **54% of first-time mothers took a childbirth education class during pregnancy.**
 - **Only 37% of first-time mothers enrolled in Medicaid took childbirth classes.**

Tobacco Use and Smoking Cessation

- 29% of women smoked in the 3 months prior to pregnancy.
- 16% smoked during the last trimester.
- 21% were smoking at the time of the survey.
- **76% of women who smoked cigarettes during the 3 months before pregnancy tried one or more smoking cessation strategies.**
 - **72% tried to quit on their own.**
 - **30% set a date by which to stop smoking.**
 - **Between 5% and 10% used booklets, videos or other materials; used a nicotine replacement product (like a patch, gum, or lozenge); or used a national/state quit line or website.**
 - **Less than 5% attended a class or program, went to counseling, or used a pill. Due to the small number of responses for these items, numbers should be interpreted with caution.**

Alcohol & Marijuana Use

- 70% drank at least some alcohol in the 3 months prior to pregnancy, and 24% had at least one binge (4 or more drinks in one sitting).
- 14% drank during the last 3 months of their pregnancy.
- 25% of women were not advised by a healthcare worker to abstain from alcohol during pregnancy, including 30% of women age 35 or more.
- 16% of women smoked marijuana in the year prior to pregnancy.
- 5% were smoking marijuana during the last 3 months of pregnancy.

Stress & Abuse

- 74% of women experienced at least one major life stressor during the year before giving birth, with 33% experiencing at least 3 stressors, and 8% experiencing 6 or more.
 - 30% experienced an emotional stressor during the year before giving birth.
 - 56% had at least one major financial stressor.
 - 9% lost a job they had wanted to keep.
 - 10% at some point did not have enough money to buy sufficient food.
 - 33% experienced partner-related stress.
 - 3% were physically abused by a husband or partner. Due to the small number of responses for this item, numbers should be interpreted with caution.
 - 22% had a potentially traumatic stress, including 4% experiencing homeless.
 - 20% of women under 20 years old were homeless at some point in the year before giving birth.

Oral Health

- 64% of women had their teeth cleaned in the year prior to their most recent pregnancy.
- 55% had a teeth cleaning during pregnancy.
- During pregnancy, 57% had a talk with a dentist or health care worker about how to care for her teeth and gums.
- 15% went to the dentist during pregnancy about a problem with their teeth and gums.
- **37% could not afford to go to the dentist during pregnancy, including 39% of women on Medicaid.**
- **32% of women enrolled in Medicaid couldn't find a dentist who was accepting Medicaid enrollees.**
- **18% didn't think it was safe to go to the dentist during pregnancy.**
- **9% couldn't find a dentist who took pregnant patients.**

Breastfeeding

- 86% of mothers initiated breastfeeding.
 - 80% breastfed at least 4 weeks, and 74% for at least 8 weeks.
- Each of the following breastfeeding-supportive hospital practices happened for at least 90% of breastfeeding mothers: staff provided breastfeeding information; baby and mother stayed in the same room, mother breastfed baby in the hospital; staff told mother to nurse on demand.
- Each of the following breastfeeding-supportive hospital practices happened for between 75% and 90% of breastfeeding mothers: hospital staff helped mother learn to breastfeed; breastfeeding took place within the first hour after delivery; baby was fed only breast milk; the hospital provided a phone number for breastfeeding support; mother was not provided a gift pack with formula.
- 67% of babies who were breastfed at least once were not given a pacifier by hospital staff.
- 86% of women who delivered low birthweight babies were provided with a breast pump in the hospital.

Work and Workplace Leave

- **76% of all women worked during their pregnancies**
 - **70% of these had returned to their jobs by the time of the survey or planned to in the near future**
- **60% of Medicaid recipients worked during pregnancy.**
 - **28% of all women who worked during pregnancy used Medicaid to pay for prenatal care.**
 - **59% of working women on Medicaid did not have paid leave at their jobs.**
- **Over half (61%) of all women felt they were able to take too little time off after delivery**

Sleep Environment

- 85% of mothers exclusively placed their infant to sleep on his or her back.
- 24% of infants always or often shared a bed.
- 36% of infants never shared a bed.

Postpartum Health

- 89% talked with a healthcare worker about birth control, and 51% reported discussing how long to wait before getting pregnant again.
- 87% had a discussion with a healthcare worker about postpartum depression.
- 47% received information on support groups for new parents.
- 37% had a discussion with a healthcare worker about getting to and staying at a healthy weight after delivery or about resources to help lose weight after pregnancy.

Questions or comments about this report, or requests for further data, may be sent to John Davy at john.davy@vermont.gov or (802) 863-7661. More information about Vermont PRAMS can also be found at <http://healthvermont.gov/research/PRAMS/prams.aspx>.