

Physician-provided oral health services cut dental caries

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(HealthDay)—For kindergarten students, physician-based comprehensive preventive oral health services (POHS) are associated with a reduction in caries, but no improvement in subsequent use of dental treatment, according to a study published online June 29 in *Pediatrics*.

Ashley M. Kranz, Ph.D., from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and colleagues conducted a retrospective study involving 29,173 kindergarten students by linking Medicaid claims with [public health surveillance](#) data. The authors examined the correlation between comprehensive POHS and [dental caries](#).

The researchers found that, compared to students with no POHS visits,

those with four or more visits had significantly fewer decayed, missing, and filled primary teeth (1.82 versus 2.21). Compared to those with no visits, students with four or more visits did not have a reduction in the mean number of untreated decayed teeth.

"POHS provided by nondental providers in medical settings were associated with a reduction in caries experience in young children but were not associated with improvement in subsequent use of treatment services in dental settings," the authors write. "Efforts to promote oral health in [medical settings](#) should continue."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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