Women who reported difficulties in finding a dentist, financial barriers, and lack of knowledge about the safety or importance of dental care during pregnancy were more likely to have low birth-weight newborns.

**RESULTS**

- The estimated prevalence of LBW newborns was 7.4% during the study period, 2016-2020 (total weighted sample 10,639,281).
- Non-Hispanic black women and those with annual household incomes of ≥$10,000 were disproportionally more likely to have LBW newborns compared to other survey respondents.

**TABLE 1.** Proportion of LBW Newborns by Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic Black</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic White</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent LBW</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIGURE 1.** Proportion of LBW Newborns by Race/Ethnicity

- About 0-15% of pregnant women experienced barriers in accessing dental care due to cost of care, the misconception that dental care is unsafe or not important during pregnancy, and unavailability of oral health services.
- Women who had a live birth during 2016-2020 and were surveyed about their behaviors and experiences related to dental care and pregnancy were more likely to have LBW newborns than others (P < 0.01% to 6.6% to 7.1% to P < 0.01).

**FIGURE 2.** Proportion of LBW Newborns by Race/Ethnicity

**FIGURE 3.** Adjusted Associations Between Barriers to Oral Health Services and LBW Newborns

- Adjusted regression estimates indicated that the following were >40% more likely to have LBW newborns than others:
  - Non-Hispanic Black women (OR=1.14, 95% CI=1.09-1.30)
  - Non-Hispanic Asian women (OR=1.13, 95% CI=1.04-1.21)
  - Those with low household income (OR=1.16, 95% CI=1.12-1.71)

- While not reaching statistical significance, adjusted estimates suggested a 3-9% increase in likelihood of LBW newborns among mothers experiencing barriers to care.

**CONCLUSIONS**

- This study found a concerning 7.4% prevalence of LBW newborns, particularly among non-Hispanic Black mothers and those with low incomes ≤$10,000, highlighting disparities.
- Study results suggest that increasing the number of dental providers accepting pregnant women and eliminating financial difficulties can help improve fetal health during pregnancy.
- Improving dental care access by enhancing awareness through education and provider training is essential steps to mitigate potential LBW risks during pregnancy.

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