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<b>College *</b>	College of Dentistry
<b>Department *</b>	Preventive and Community Dentistry
<b>Title of Research *</b>	Emergency Department use for Dental Conditions: National trends over 10 years
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<b>Introduction &amp; Purpose *</b>	Emergency department (ED) use for dental conditions is a growing concern due to reliance on EDs as a safety net for unmet dental needs as well as due to significantly increased costs associated with such use. The purpose of the study is to understand the national trends in ED use for dental conditions over 10 years and identify the characteristics of patients who seek care at EDs for non-emergent dental conditions.
<b>Experimental Design *</b>	Ten years of National Hospital Ambulatory Medical Care Survey– a national probability sample survey of hospital ED visits that are conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics, CDC were utilized from 2000 to 2009. Ten year trends in ED use for dental conditions as a proportion of total ED use were estimated. Multivariable logistic regression was used to assess risk factors associated with having an ED visit for a dental condition. Risk factors identified were then compared across years examined.
<b>Results *</b>	A significant linear increase in ED visits for dental conditions as a percent of total ED visits was found over the ten year period examined (Spearman correlation=0.91, p-value=0.0002). Compared to year 2000, more racial minorities and those insured by public insurance or uninsured are more likely to have an ED visit for dental in 2009. A majority of such visits led to medication prescription and follow up plans, but less than 10% have any medical procedures performed on them.
<b>Conclusions *</b>	Significant increasing trend in proportion of ED dental visits, especially by racial minorities and uninsured and Medicaid enrollees highlights the increasing disparities in access to oral healthcare. Only palliative treatment, most often only medications are provided at EDs, which surfaces the questions of whether these patients ultimately receive complete resolution from the dental problem that caused them to visit the ED.

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