

Alcohol Use Among Minnesota Adults

2020

Excessive alcohol use can lead to both short- and long-term health and safety issues. Short-term harms include injuries such as motor vehicle injuries or drowning; violence including homicide, suicide, and intimate partner violence; alcohol poisoning; and poor birth outcomes.¹ Over time, alcohol use can lead to chronic diseases such as heart disease, liver disease, digestive problems, and several types of cancer.¹ Most adults aged 18 and older in Minnesota during 2020 reported drinking alcohol during the past month (58.8% overall; 54.5% of women, 63.0% of men), and 18.4% reported binge drinking (i.e., ≥ 4 drinks on an occasion for women, and ≥ 5 drinks for men).

This data brief reports on alcohol use among Minnesota adults as measured by the 2020 Minnesota Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). The BRFSS is an annual phone-based survey of adults ages 18 years and older, funded by CDC and implemented by the Minnesota Department of Health.

Overall, males are most likely to report binge drinking

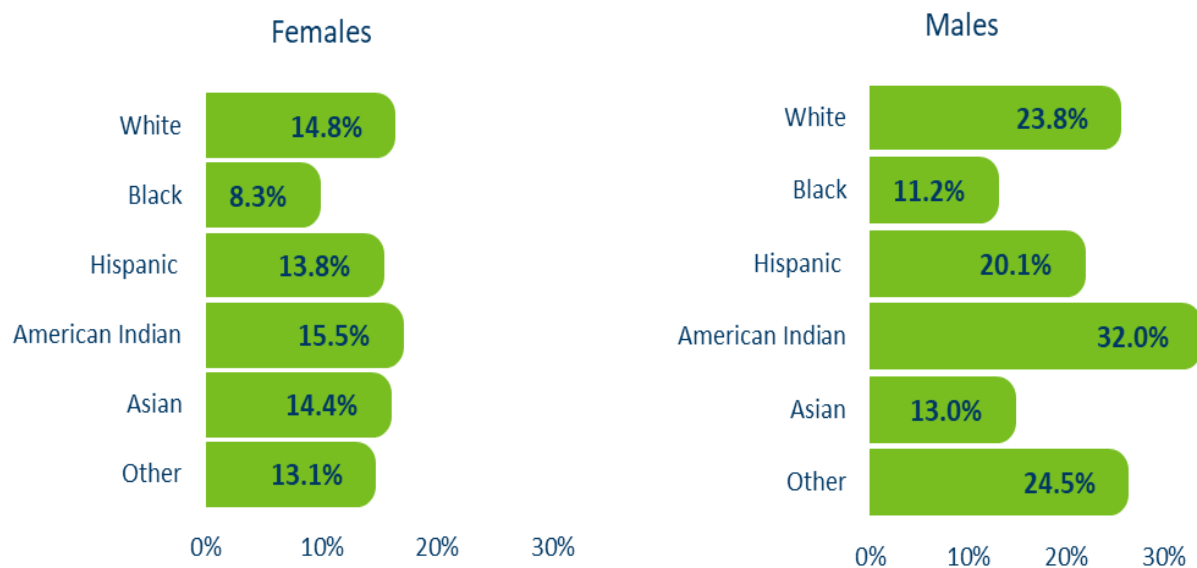


Figure 1: Percent of adults who reported binge drinking (i.e., ≥ 4 drinks per occasion for women, ≥ 5 drinks for men) by racial/ethnic category and sex, 2020.

ALCOHOL USE AMONG MINNESOTA ADULTS

Binge drinking is the pattern of drinking associated with the greatest costs—both health and economic. Overall, men are more likely to report binge drinking than are women. Nearly one-third (32.0%) of American Indian men reported binge drinking in 2020, compared to nearly a quarter (23.8%) of white men. Although women report less binge drinking than men, these results show that more than one in ten women reported binge drinking during the past month.

Binge drinking rates are highest among adults in their early 20's.

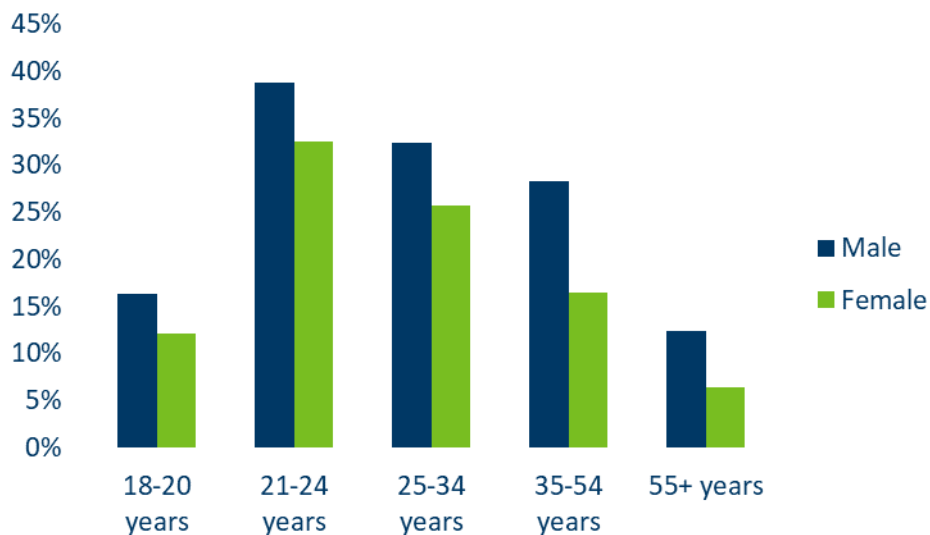


Figure 2: Percent of adults who reported binge drinking, 2020, by age group and sex).

Young adults aged 21-24 years old were the most likely to report binge drinking (38.8% of males and 32.6% of females). However, younger drinkers 18-20 years old were more likely to report binge drinking at a higher intensity (i.e., more drinks on an occasion) or more frequently than the young adult age group. For example, 41.9% of 18–20-year-old males reported drinking seven or more drinks during an occasion, compared to 35.4% of 21–24-year-old males. Nearly one-quarter (22.7%) of males and 19.2% of females 18-20 years old reported binge drinking four or more times per month, compared to 21.6% of males and 16.1% of females aged 21-24 years. Individuals who binge drink, especially those who binge drink more frequently and with higher intensity, are at higher risks for negative outcomes.

Binge drinkers are more likely to drink more heavily and frequently, and to drive after drinking too much.

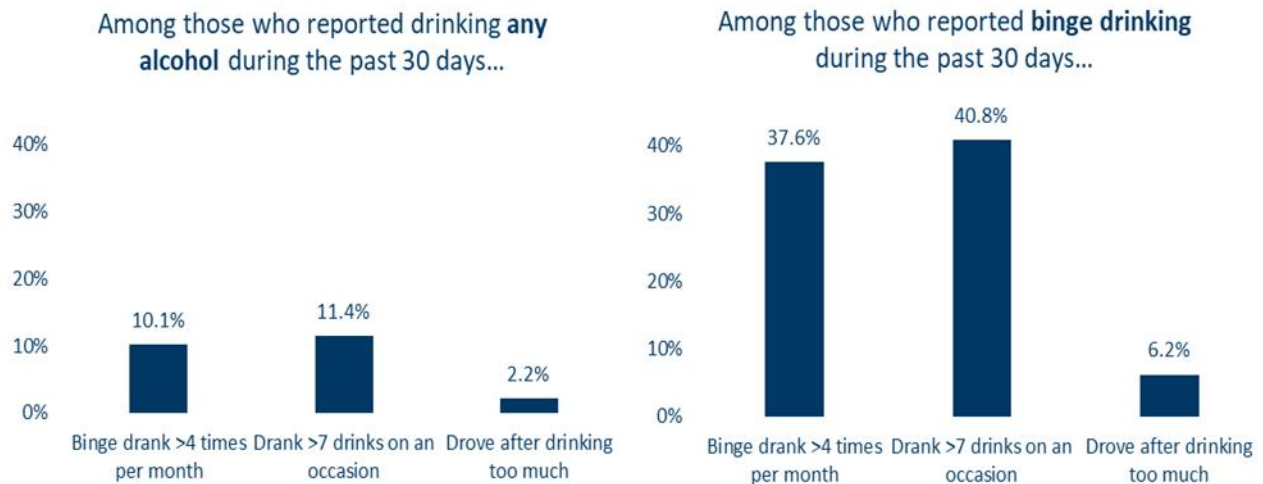


Figure 3: Percent of adults who reported high binge frequency and binge intensity, and driving after drinking too much, by drinking pattern, 2020 (any alcohol consumption during past month, left, binge drinking during past month, right).

These results indicate that while some individuals report binge drinking only occasionally, those who binge drink are more likely to drink more frequently and greater quantities on an occasion. Binge drinkers are almost three times more likely to report driving after drinking too much than non-binge drinkers.

Excessive Alcohol Use is Preventable

The [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/resources/2020-2025-dietary-guidelines-online-materials) (<https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/resources/2020-2025-dietary-guidelines-online-materials>) recommend that adults 21 years and older either choose not to drink, or to drink in moderation (2 drinks or less per day for men or 1 drink or less for women).² The Community Guide's [Excessive Alcohol Consumption](https://www.thecommunityguide.org/topic/excessive-alcohol-consumption) (<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/topic/excessive-alcohol-consumption>)³ resource includes several evidence-based recommendations to reduce the likelihood of excessive drinking, including drinking underage and binge drinking, and the related harms:

- Enhance enforcement of laws prohibiting alcohol sales to minors
- Increase the price of alcohol by increasing alcohol taxes
- Regulate alcohol outlet density
- Implement dram shop (commercial host) liability
- Avoid privatization of retail alcohol sales
- Maintain limits on the days and hours when alcohol is sold (in settings such as liquor stores, restaurants, and bars).

References

1. Esser MB, Sherk A, Liu Y ea. Deaths and years of potential life lost from excessive alcohol use — United States, 2011–2015. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. 2020;69:1428-1433.
2. US Department of Agriculture, Services UDoHaH. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025* December 2020 2020.
3. Community Preventive Services Task Force. Task force findings for excessive alcohol consumption. Available at: <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/topic/excessive-alcohol-consumption>. Accessed March 23, 2018.

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