

Estimates of Alcohol Exposed Pregnancies

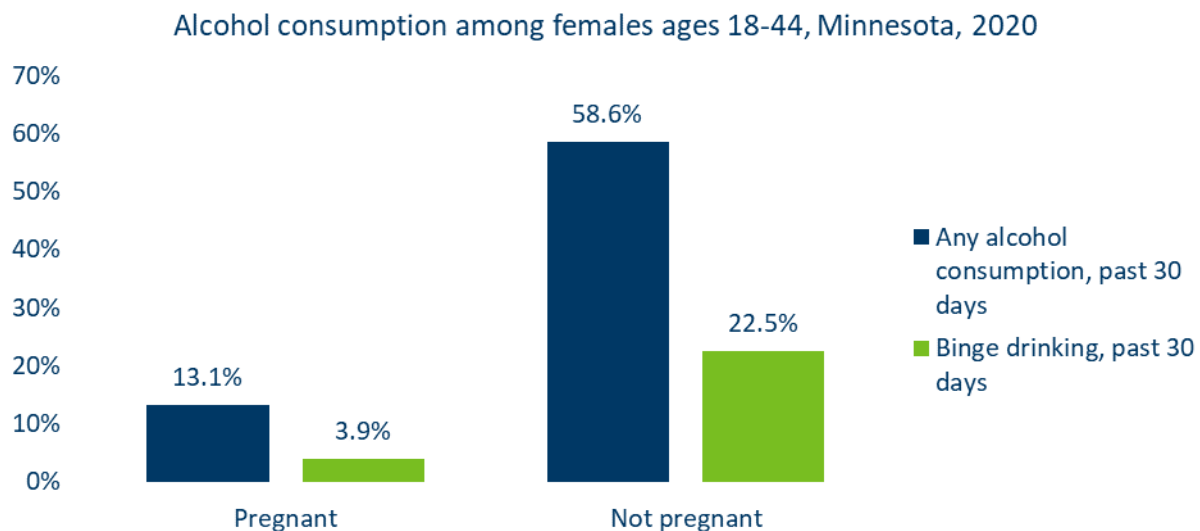
MINNESOTA 2020

No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy

Alcohol can cause issues with fetal development during any stage of pregnancy, including before a person knows they are pregnant. Alcohol passes from the pregnant parent to the baby through the umbilical cord. The baby’s brain develops throughout pregnancy and can be affected by alcohol exposure at any time.

During the first three months of pregnancy, drinking alcohol can cause the baby to have abnormal facial features. Growth and central nervous system problems (e.g., low birthweight, brain injury, behavioral problems) can also occur. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). FASD has no cure, and presents as a range of lifelong physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities.

More than one in 10 pregnant individuals reported drinking during the past month

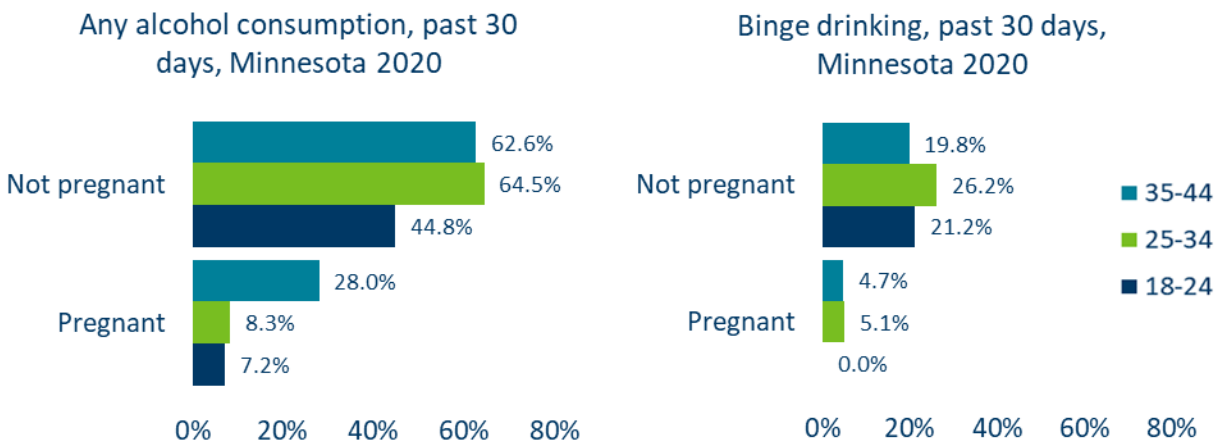


Minnesota Behavior Risk Factor Survey, 2020

About 13% of people aged 18-44 years who reported being pregnant said they had consumed alcohol in the past month; 4% of pregnant people said they had binge drank (i.e., had 4 or more drinks in an occasion) during the last month.

Individuals aged 35-44 years old who reported they were pregnant were more likely to report drinking any alcohol during the past 30 days than younger people who were pregnant, however they reported similar binge drinking rates as pregnant people aged 25-34 years (see below). People who reported they were currently pregnant reported a lower frequency of binge drinking than those who said they were not pregnant (0.48 days during the past month vs. 1.32 days during the past month; $p < .001$). In addition, pregnant people reported a slightly lower binge intensity (i.e., number of drinks consumed during a binge) than people who said they were not pregnant (4.9 drinks vs. 6.2 drinks, $p < .001$).

Pregnant people aged 35-44 were 3 to 4 times more likely to drink alcohol during the past 30 days than younger individuals.



Minnesota Behavior Risk Factor Survey, 2020

Reducing alcohol-exposed pregnancies in Minnesota

In 2019, about 8,823 pregnancies were exposed to alcohol in Minnesota.ⁱ Diagnosing FASD is difficult, as there is not a medical test for these conditions. Often the signs and symptoms do not present until the child enters school, and other disorders such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) have similar symptoms. Young adults born with FASD are more likely to experience disrupted school experiences, legal system involvement, and substance/alcohol abuse problems.

It can be difficult to refrain from drinking alcohol during pregnancy. If you are trying to get pregnant or are pregnant and find it difficult to avoid drinking alcohol, reach out for help--there is support out there for you and you are not alone. Do not want to miss out on the fun drinks and social occasions? There are alcohol-free mocktails, beer, and wine you can have or bring with you to social occasions. Reaching out to a healthcare provider or exploring resources designed to help you during your pregnancy (such as Proof Alliance's [Get Help to Stop Drinking During Pregnancy \(https://www.proofalliance.org/article/help-to-quit-drinking-during-pregnancy/\)](https://www.proofalliance.org/article/help-to-quit-drinking-during-pregnancy/)) are other ways you can work towards an alcohol-free pregnancy.

If you are close with someone who is drinking alcohol during their pregnancy, there are ways you can encourage them and support them in their efforts to stop. You can cut down your own drinking when around them to eliminate the extra temptation or make mocktails or alcohol-free beverages to have with them on special occasions. You can also talk with family and friends about the health benefits of alcohol-free pregnancies or provide them with resources to support them throughout their pregnancy (see Proof Alliance's [Support page](https://www.proofalliance.org/support/) www.proofalliance.org/support/ for examples).

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Suggested Citation

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ⁱ Based on the percent of pregnant individuals who reported any alcohol consumption during the previous month.