

# 2022 Alcohol Use and Abuse: Binge Drinking Highest Among Younger Adults

There has been little change in the prevalence of self-reported "binge drinking" or of chronic heavy drinking among Delaware adults during the past six years. In 2022, **14.0 percent of Delaware adults reported binge drinking** during the 30 days prior to being interviewed, and **5.5 percent of adults reported chronic, heavy drinking**.

The Delaware BRFs asks several questions about alcoholic beverages, which are analyzed to provide prevalence estimates for three factors: 1) percentage of the adult population **who drink alcoholic beverages** of any type, 2) percentage of adults who are **binge drinkers**, and 3) percentage of adults who are **heavy drinkers**. Chronic heavy drinking and/or binge drinking can increase the drinker's risk for personal injury, car crashes and fatalities, heart disease, cancer, cirrhosis of the liver, and a number of other health conditions.



The BRFs defines binge drinking as "males having five or more drinks, and females having four or more drinks, on one occasion." **Binge drinking was higher among men** (16.5 percent) than women (11.6 percent). Prevalence was highest among adults age 18-44 and declined steadily with age.

## **Binge Drinking, by Age:**

- 18-24 = **20.4** percent
- 25-34 = **19.8** percent
- 35-44 = **20.8** percent

- 45-54 = **16.1** percent
- 55-64 = **10.8** percent
- 65 and older = **5.2** percent

Binge drinkers are about **two times as likely as those who don't binge drink to smoke cigarettes**, increasing their risks for several chronic diseases. About **23.9 percent** of binge drinkers report also being smokers, compared to only 12.6 percent of adults who don't binge drink.

## Regular Heavy Drinking

"**Heavy drinking**" is defined by the BRFSS and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as more than 14 alcoholic drinks per week for men and more than 7 drinks per week for women.

In 2022, **5.5 percent of Delaware adults reported heavy drinking**. The trend is slightly higher than 5.0 percent in 2021.

## Any Alcohol Use

**In 2022, more than half (53.6 percent) of Delaware's adult population reported drinking alcohol at least once in the past 30 days.** The percentage of the adult population who consume at least some alcoholic beverages has remained largely unchanged for the past decade.