

# Alcohol Use in California



## A Standard Drink Is:



**12 ounces of beer**  
about 5% alcohol

**8-10 ounces of malt liquor**  
about 7% alcohol

**5 ounces of wine**  
about 12% alcohol

**1.5 ounce shot of distilled spirits**  
(gin, rum, vodka, whiskey, etc.)  
about 40% alcohol

NIAAA

## Health Effects of Excessive Alcohol Use:

### IMMEDIATE HEALTH EFFECTS:

Excessive alcohol use has immediate effects that increase the risk of many harmful health conditions, including the following:

- Alcohol Poisoning
- Burns, Drownings, Falls
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Miscarriage, Stillbirth
- Motor Vehicle Crashes
- Risky Sexual Behaviors, which increase risk of Unintended Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Violence (Homicide, Sexual Assault, Suicide)

### CHRONIC HEALTH EFFECTS:

Over time, excessive alcohol use can lead to chronic diseases and other serious problems, including:

- Alcohol Use Disorder
- Anxiety and Depression
- Cancer
- Digestive Problems
- Heart Disease
- High Blood Pressure
- Liver Disease
- Stroke
- Weakened Immune System

Excessive Alcohol Use | CDC & Drinking too much alcohol can harm your health | CDC

## Excessive Alcohol Use Is:

### WOMEN

**BINGE DRINKING**  
4 or more drinks on one occasion

**HEAVY DRINKING**  
8 or more drinks per week

### MEN

**BINGE DRINKING**  
5 or more drinks on one occasion

**HEAVY DRINKING**  
15 or more drinks per week

Any drinking by anyone under 21 years old

Any drinking by pregnant women



-CDC

## Excessive Alcohol Use-Related Mortality In CA:

In 2020, excessive alcohol use was responsible for:

**18,758 DEATHS**

and

**474,905 YEARS OF POTENTIAL LIFE LOST\***



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## Costs in CA in 2010:



Excessive alcohol use:  
**\$35 BILLION**

Binge drinking:  
**\$25.8 BILLION**

Underage drinking:  
**\$3.4 BILLION**

Drinking while pregnant:  
**\$729.8 MILLION**

-Sacks et al., 2015

## Among CA Youth:

A 2019 survey of 9th-12th graders found that within the 30 days before the survey:



### FEMALES

- 24% drank at least one drink
- 8% binge drank (4+ drinks)
- 1% had 10+ drinks in a row
- 34% obtained alcohol from someone else

### MALES

- 19% drank at least one drink
- 6% binge drank (5+ drinks)
- 2% had 10+ drinks in a row
- 32% obtained alcohol from someone else

-CDC YRBS Dashboard

## Among CA Adults in 2020:

1 in 2 consumed alcohol in the past 30 days

1 in 6 binge drank

1 in 16 drank heavily<sup>^</sup>

-CDC BRFSS

## CURIOUS ABOUT YOUR DRINKING HABITS?

Take the confidential self-assessment:  
Check Your Drinking | Alcohol | CDC

## NEED HELP?

If you or someone you know needs help with their alcohol use, call SAMHSA's confidential, free, 24/7 National Hotline at 1-800-622-4357

or visit:

[samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline](https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline)  
[www.findtreatment.gov](https://www.findtreatment.gov)

<sup>^</sup>CDC BRFSS defines heavy drinking as having more than 7 drinks per week for adult women and having more than 14 drinks per week for adult men.

\*Years of potential life lost is a measure of premature death

1. Custom analyses using CDC ARDI and California Comprehensive Master Death File

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