**EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL USE IN NORTH CAROLINA**

Excessive alcohol use is a **leading preventable cause** of death in North Carolina. In 2022, there were **over 5,500** deaths due to excessive alcohol use in North Carolina.

90% of excessive drinkers are **not** alcohol dependent. Excessive drinking is associated with injuries, violence, and chronic conditions like stroke, hypertension, and some cancers.

---

**EXAMPLES OF EXCESSIVE DRINKING**

**FOR WOMEN**

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

**BINGE DRINKING:** Consuming 4 or more drinks on an occasion

**FOR MEN**

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

**BINGE DRINKING:** Consuming 5 or more drinks on an occasion

---

Any alcohol consumed by **pregnant persons** and those under age 21.

---

**STRATEGIES TO REDUCE EXCESSIVE DRINKING:**

**CONTROL SYSTEM:** Maintain state control of alcohol sales and avoid privatization of retail alcohol sales.

**MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL HOST LIABILITY LAWS:** These laws permit retail establishments to be held liable for injuries or harms caused by illegal service to intoxicated or underage customers.

**INCREASE ALCOHOL TAXES:** Increase the price of alcohol by raising alcohol taxes.

**REGULATE ALCOHOL OUTLET DENSITY:** Continue to limit the number of businesses selling and distributing alcohol in neighborhoods.

**INCREASE ELECTRONIC SCREENING AND BRIEF INTERVENTIONS:** Electronically screen adults for excessive drinking using validated questions, have a brief intervention with those that screen positive.

**CONTINUE TO LIMIT THE DAYS AND HOURS ALCOHOL SALES OCCUR:** Maintain or decrease days and hours that alcohol is sold.

---

In NC, 19% of high school students said they are currently drinking alcohol. Of those high school students who drink, 50% binge drink, 36% usually drink liquor, and 43% usually obtained alcohol through someone, such as family or friends, giving it to them versus buying it themselves.

---

In NC, **nearly half** of adults currently drink. Among those who drink, **12%** drink heavily and **34%** binge drink at least once a month.

---

Excessive alcohol use cost NC **roughly $9.7 billion** in 2017.

---

For more information please see: The Community Guide

[www.thecommunityguide.org/topic/excessive-alcohol-consumption](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/topic/excessive-alcohol-consumption)

---

This fact sheet is partially supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling $166,667.

The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.