

DID YOU KNOW?

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DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION

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38 Million American Adults are Binge Drinkers, CDC Says

Health Day News) -- An estimated 38 million American adults are binge drinkers -- defined as men who down five or more drinks at a sitting and women who consume four or more drinks at one time

Of the 17 percent of Americans who engage in binge drinking, most are 18 to 24 years old. But those 65 and older engage in the practice more often, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Binge drinking remains a common and largely unrecognized public health problem," Ursula Bauer, director of CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, said during a midday news conference.

What's more, binge drinking accounts for more than 40,000 of the 80,000 alcohol-related deaths each year in the country, and represents about 75 percent of the more than \$200 billion in costs from alcohol abuse, the researchers reported.

"This level of consumption usually leads to impairment and is strongly associated with alcohol-impaired driving, risky sexual behavior and interpersonal violence," Bauer said. "Over time, it can also increase the risk of serious health problems, including cancer, heart disease and liver failure."

Binge drinking is associated with many health problems, including—

- Unintentional injuries (e.g., car crashes, falls, burns, drowning)
- Intentional injuries (e.g., firearm injuries, sexual assault, domestic violence)
- Alcohol poisoning
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Unintended pregnancy (Children born with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders)
- High blood pressure, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases
- Liver disease
- Neurological damage
- Sexual dysfunction

Of all the alcohol consumed by adults, more than 50 percent is consumed while binge drinking; among teens that rises to 90 percent, the report said.

Commenting on the report Dr. J.C. Gambit, a professor of psychiatry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, said that "alcohol is very much a part of the U.S. culture, but it also causes considerable death and illness."

"It is important that individuals know that excessive drinking can have both immediate and long-term negative consequences and it is in their interest to moderate their alcohol use, "



TOBACCO & NICOTINE

Tobacco is a carrier for the highly addictive drug nicotine. Once your body gets a taste for nicotine, it can quickly become a life-long addiction, with extremely fatal consequences.

Nicotine is the main drug in all forms of tobacco. Nicotine acts as both a stimulant and a sedative.

The Risks

Whether smoked or chewed, nicotine is one of the most highly addictive drugs used in today's society. And once you're hooked, it's extremely hard to overcome this addiction. Surveys have shown that most adult smokers first tried cigarettes during their teen years, and there is a direct relationship between early smoking and adult addiction.

Smoking harms your immune system and can affect nearly every organ of your body. When you smoke, it's not only the nicotine that's dangerous, but also chemicals in tobacco like carbon monoxide, tar, formaldehyde, cyanide and ammonia—many of which are known carcinogens (cancer-causing poisons).

Chewing or sniffing tobacco is just as dangerous as smoking and also has a high risk of addiction.

Long Term Effects

Greatest long-term risk of smoking is cancer and lung disease. Even after 30 years of warnings on packages, tobacco continues to impact our health. In 2010, more than 220,000 new cases of lung cancer were reported, and more than 150,000 Americans died as a direct result of the disease.

Bottom Line

By giving up tobacco for life, you can drastically improve your health and reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease and other life-threatening diseases associated with tobacco use.