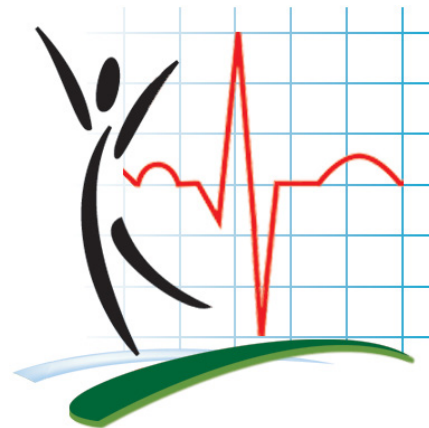


Health Fact Sheets

Heavy drinking, 2014



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- . not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
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- ^P preliminary
- ^r revised
- X suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- ^E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published
- * significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

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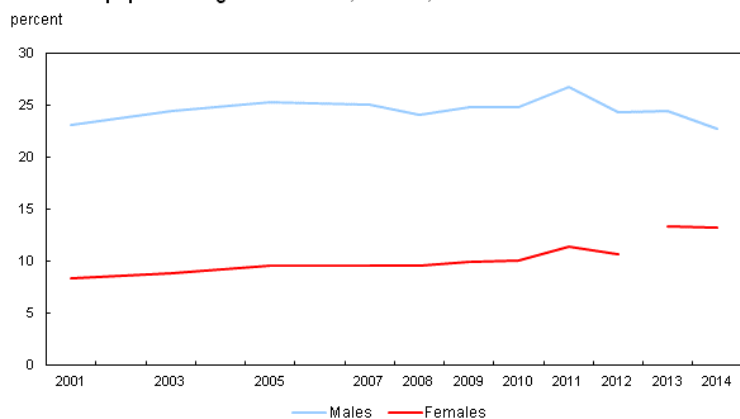
Heavy drinking, 2014

Excessive alcohol consumption can have serious health and social consequences, especially when combined with other behaviours such as driving while intoxicated. For males, heavy drinking refers to having consumed five or more drinks, per occasion, at least once a month during the past year. The same definition applied to females between 2001 and 2012. Starting in 2013, the limit for heavy drinking for females was reduced to four or more drinks.¹

In 2014, 17.9% of Canadians aged 12 and over (5.3 million people) reported alcohol consumption that classified them as heavy drinkers. This was a decrease from 2013 when 18.9% were heavy drinkers.

Heavy drinking was reported among 22.7% of males and 13.2% of females in 2014. For males this rate was a significant decrease from 24.5% in 2013. Compared with 2013, the rate of female heavy drinking in 2014 was about the same (Chart 1).

Chart 1
Percentage who reported heavy drinking in the last year, by sex, household population aged 12 or older, Canada, 2001 to 2014



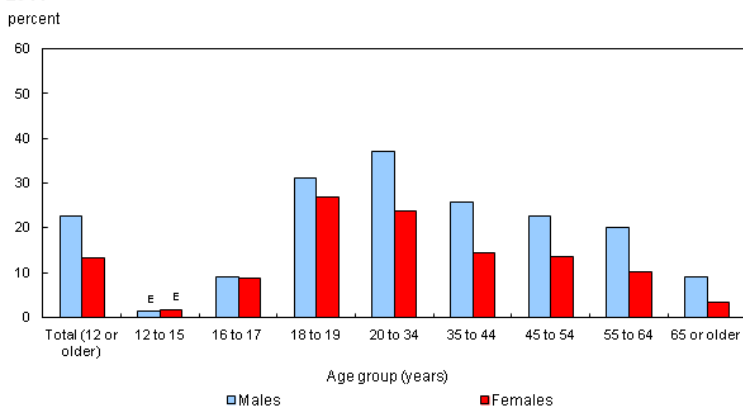
Note: For males, heavy drinking refers to having 5 or more drinks, on one occasion, at least once a month in the last year. The same definition applies to females between 2001 and 2012. Starting in 2013, the limit for heavy drinking for females was reduced to four or more drinks.

Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 to 2014.

Males were more likely to report heavy drinking than females for all ages, except between 12 and 19, where there was no significant difference between the sexes.

The highest rate of heavy drinking for males was among those aged 20 to 34 (37.1%). For females, the highest rates were among those aged 18 to 19 and 20 to 34. In the 18 to 19 age group, 27.0% of females reported heavy drinking, and in the 20 to 34 age group, the rate was 23.7% (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Percentage who reported heavy drinking in the last year, by age group and sex, household population aged 12 or older, Canada, 2014



^E use with caution (these data have a coefficient of variation from 16.6% to 33.3%)

Note: Heavy drinking refers to males who reported having 5 or more drinks, or women who reported having 4 or more drinks, on one occasion, at least once a month in the past year.

Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2014.

The proportion of residents who reported heavy drinking was **lower** than the national average (17.9%) in:

- Ontario (16.2%)
- British Columbia (15.8%)

The proportion of residents who reported heavy drinking was **higher** than the national average in:

- Newfoundland and Labrador (25.4%)
- New Brunswick (21.4%)
- Quebec (20.2%)
- Yukon (27.8%)
- Northwest Territories (32.7%)

Residents of the other provinces and Nunavut² reported rates that were about the same as the national average.

Notes

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- ¹ A definition change was implemented in 2013 to conform with the World Health Organization (WHO) and Health Canada guidelines for heavy drinking. Heavy drinking refers to males who reported having 5 or more drinks, or women who reported having 4 or more drinks, on one occasion, at least once a month in the past year. While this indicator remains comparable for males to the 5 or more drinks indicator published in previous years, it is no longer comparable for females.
- ² Note that the rate for Nunavut had a coefficient of variation between 16.6% and 33.3%; interpret with caution.
-

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Data

Additional data from the Canadian Community Health Survey are available from CANSIM table [105–0501](#).