



Alcohol Prevalence, Western Australia: 2004

In Brief

A study in 2004 of the alcohol drinking status of West Australians aged 14 years and over found that:

- 10.1% consumed alcohol on a daily basis (118,600 persons);
- 46.7% consumed alcohol on a weekly basis (756,800 persons);
- 30.3% consumed alcohol on a less than weekly basis (485,800 persons);
- nearly four out of 10 (39.1%) had consumed alcohol at risky or high risk levels in the preceding year;
- there was a higher rate of males compared to females who consumed alcohol at risky or high risk levels (44.7% vs 33.7%); and
- in the past year just over one in four (27.8%) reported they were verbally abused by someone who was intoxicated.

Alcohol drinking status

Trends in alcohol drinking status for West Australians aged 14 years and older over the four National Drug Strategy Household Surveys (NDSHS) from 1995 to 2004 are shown in Figure 1. Different definitions of 'alcohol drinking status' were used in the 1995 and 1998 surveys compared to the 2001 and 2004 surveys.

To maintain data continuity across the four surveys, data from the 1995 and 1998 surveys for the category of 'regular' (ie daily) alcohol drinking represented the combined categories of 'daily' and 'weekly' drinkers used in the 2001 and 2004 surveys.

The category of 'occasional' (ie less than daily) alcohol drinking in the 1995 and 1998 surveys represented the 'less than weekly' category in 2001 and 2004 surveys. In the 1995 and 1998 surveys the term of 'not more than one glass of alcohol' represented 'never a full glass' in the 2001 and 2004 surveys.

Trends: 1995 - 2004

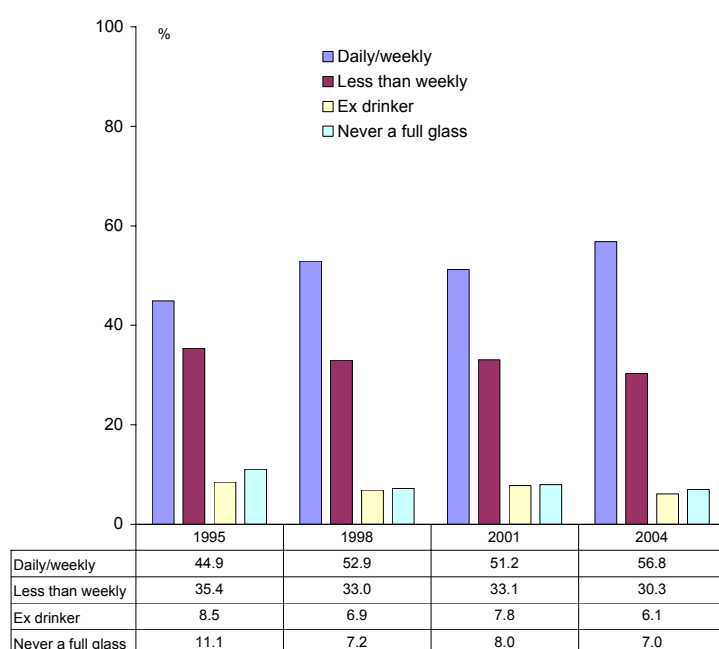
Table 1 (page 2) shows that from 1995 to 2004 combined daily and weekly alcohol consumption increased from 44.9% to 56.8%, whereas less than weekly alcohol consumption declined, from 35.4% to 30.3%.

From the 2001 and 2004 surveys (Table 1, page 2):

- there was not a statistically significant change in the proportion of those who drank alcohol on a daily basis;
- there was a significant increase from 42.5% to 46.7% of those drinking weekly;
- a significant decrease from 33.1% to 30.3% of those drinking less than weekly;
- there was a significant increase of males who consumed alcohol on a daily basis - from 11.3% to 14.8%;
- there was a significant increase of females who consumed alcohol on a weekly basis from 36.5% to 41.8%.

Written by Greg Swensen (June 2007)

Figure 1
Alcohol drinking status (%), WA, 1995 - 2004



2004 in detail

The 2004 survey found that nearly one in five (19.3%) of those aged 60 years and over consumed alcohol on a daily basis and that males were more than twice as likely as females to consume alcohol at this level (28.5% vs 11.2%). See Figure 2.

Figure 3 shows the age related pattern of differences in the proportion of males and females who consumed alcohol on a weekly basis shows that female rate is higher than the male rate across all age groups.

Figure 2
Daily alcohol drinking status (%) by age group & sex, WA, 2004

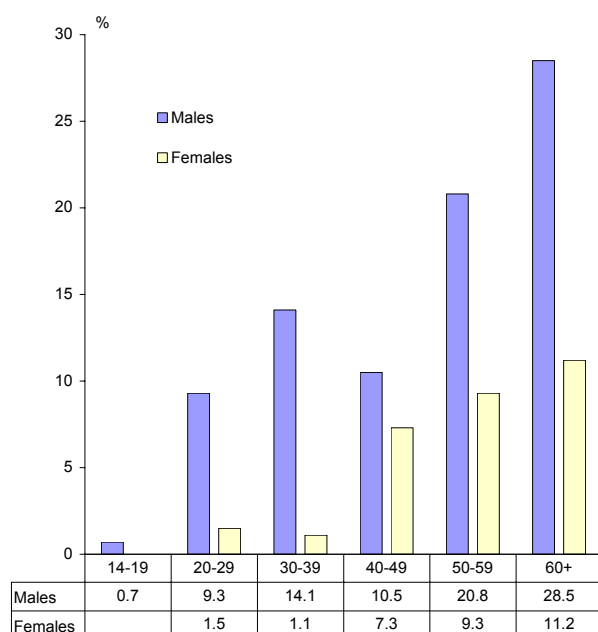
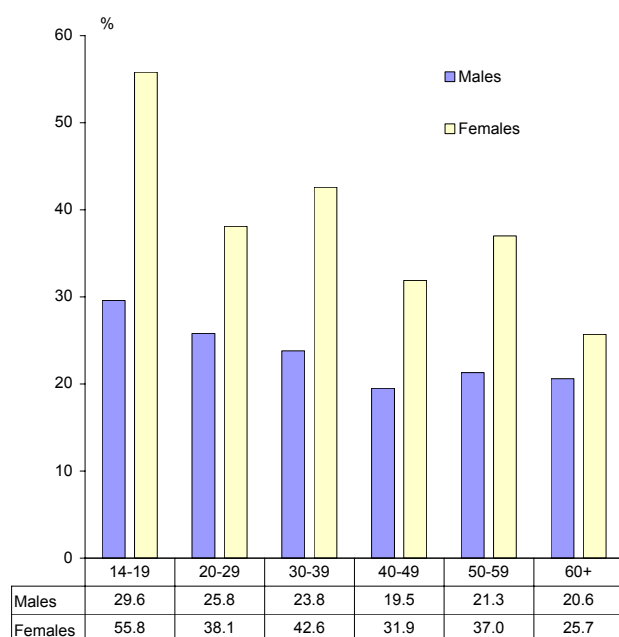


Figure 3
Weekly alcohol drinking status (%) by age group & sex, WA, 2004



In 2004 on average half (52.2%) of those aged 14 years and over consumed between one and two standard drinks on a usual day they consumed alcohol.

It was also found that nearly two thirds of females (62.7%) compared to nearly four out of ten (38.3%) males consumed between one and two standard drinks on a usual drinking day.

Short term alcohol risk

Short term alcohol risk is determined by the amount of alcohol an individual consumes on a usual drinking day. It refers to risky and high risk alcohol consumption which can result in social and health problems due to violence and increased risk of injury, such as motor vehicle accidents and assaults.

In 2004 in the past year males and females in the 20 to 29 age group (69.4% vs 60.0%) were more likely than other age groups to have consumed alcohol at risky/high risk levels at sometime during the year. See Figures 4 and 5, (page 3).

Table 1
Alcohol drinking status (%), WA, 1995 - 2004

	1995	1998	2001	2004
Males				
Daily			11.3	14.8 #
Weekly	54.6	62.2	48.5	51.7
Less than weekly	29.6	28.0	26.2	23.0
Ex drinker	7.7	4.8	7.3	4.8 #
Never a full glass	8.1	5.0	6.7	5.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Females				
Daily			6.0	5.6
Weekly	35.4	43.6	36.5	41.8 #
Less than weekly	41.2	38.1	40.0	36.9
Ex drinker	9.3	9.1	8.2	7.3
Never a full glass	14.1	9.3	9.2	8.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons				
Daily			8.7	10.1
Weekly	44.9	52.9	42.5	46.7 #
Less than weekly	35.4	33.0	33.1	30.3 #
Ex drinker	8.5	6.9	7.8	6.1 #
Never a full glass	11.1	7.2	8.0	7.0 #
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 1998 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results. Canberra, Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2000; 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health and Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006.

Note: # 2004 result significantly different from 2001 result.

In relation to risky/high risk alcohol use on at least a weekly basis in 2004, one in five (21.9%) males and just over one in ten (11.7%) females in the 20 to 29 year age group consumed alcohol at this level. The next highest rate of at least weekly risky/high risk use involved the 14 to 19 age group for both males and females (22.2% vs 8.5%).

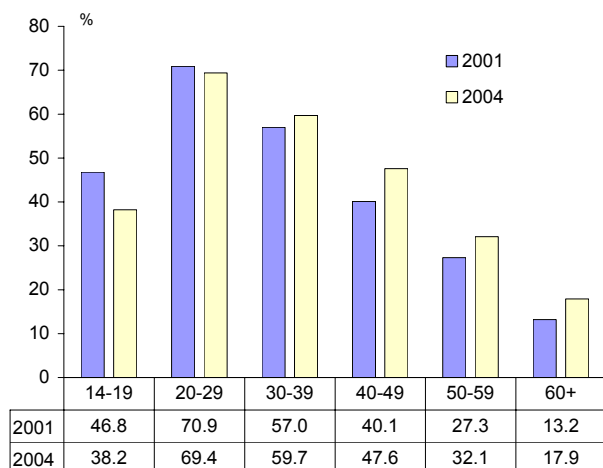
Table 2
Short term risky/high risk alcohol consumption in the past year by age group & sex, WA 2001 - 2004

	Males	Females	Persons
2004			
14-19	38.2	44.0	41.0
20-29	69.4	60.0	65.2
30-39	59.7	41.4	50.5
40-49	47.6	37.3	42.4
50-59	32.1	17.4	24.8
60+	17.9	8.5	12.9
All ages	44.7	33.7	39.1
2001			
14-19	46.8	53.1	49.8
20-29	70.9	61.6	66.2
30-39	57.0	36.2	45.6
40-49	40.1	29.0	35.1
50-59	27.3	16.6	22.1
60+	13.2	5.2	8.9
All ages	42.7	32.5	37.6

Source: 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey. Western Australia results. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health & Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006 (Table 30).

Note: Base - those who have consumed alcohol in past year. Excludes abstainers and low risk drinkers.
Male: Risky and high risk = consumption of 7 or more standard drinks on any one day.
Female: Risky and high risk = consumption of 5 or more standard drinks on any one day.

Figure 4
Male short term risky/high risk alcohol consumption in the past year by age group, WA, 2001 - 2004



In the course of the past year just over one in four (27.8%) of West Australians reported being verbally abused by someone who was intoxicated, 5.5% as being physically abused and one in eight (12.1%) as being put in fear due to another's intoxication (Table 3).

Males were more likely than females to undertake activities whilst under the influence of alcohol, such as going to work (8.6% vs 1.6%), drove a motor vehicle (30.0% vs 13.5%) or verbally abused someone (9.0% vs 4.2%). (See Table 4, page 4).

There were significant decreases from 2001 to 2004 in a number of activities carried out by females whilst under the influence of alcohol, such as going to work, creating a public disturbance or verbally abusing someone. (See Table 4, page 4.)

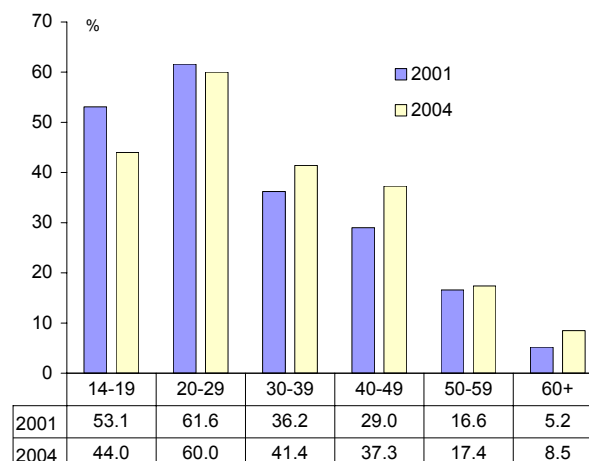
Table 3
Victims of alcohol related incidents by sex WA, 2001 - 2004

	2001	2004
Males		
Verbal abuse	30.8	34.2
Physical abuse	6.3	7.7
Put in fear	11.9	8.8
Females		
Verbal abuse	25.4	21.4
Physical abuse	4.5	3.3
Put in fear	17.6	15.4
Persons		
Verbal abuse	28.1	27.8
Physical abuse	5.4	5.5
Put in fear	14.8	12.1

Source: 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health and Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006 (Table 69).

Note: # 2004 result significantly different from 2001 result.

Figure 5
Female short term risky/high risk alcohol consumption in the past year by age group, WA, 2001 - 2004



Long term alcohol risk

Long term alcohol risk is determined by the amount of alcohol that an individual would consume over a usual week and can result in health problems such as diseases of the liver, digestive system, brain and cardiovascular system due to chronic illnesses caused by alcohol.

There was a higher proportion of males than females who drank alcohol in a usual week which was at long term risky/high risk levels of harm, with little change occurring between the 2001 and 2004 surveys.

Table 4
Activities undertaken while under the influence of alcohol by sex, WA, 2001 - 2004

	2001	2004
Males		
Went to work	8.3	8.6
Drove a motor vehicle	27.3	30.0
Created a public disturbance or nuisance	5.1	5.5
Caused damage to property	4.4	5.4
Verbally abused someone	9.4	9.0
Females		
Went to work	3.4	1.6 #
Drove a motor vehicle	13.8	13.5
Created a public disturbance or nuisance	3.1	1.3 #
Caused damage to property	1.8	0.3 #
Verbally abused someone	7.1	4.2 #
Persons		
Went to work	5.9	5.1
Drove a motor vehicle	20.7	21.9
Created a public disturbance or nuisance	4.1	3.4
Caused damage to property	3.1	2.8
Verbally abused someone	8.3	6.6

Source: 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health and Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006 (Table 66).

Note: # 2004 result significantly different from 2001 result. Rates shaded to indicate relative standard error greater than 50%.

Overall, in 2004 males were more likely than females to consume alcohol at long term risky/high risk levels of harm (12.9% vs 9.9%).

Whilst in the long term there were similar proportions of males and females who drank alcohol at risky levels (7.9% vs 8.0%), there was a higher proportion of males than females who consumed alcohol at a high risk level of harm (5.1% vs 1.9%). See Figures 6 and 7.

Figure 6
Male long term harm of risky/high risk alcohol consumption by age group, WA, 2001 - 2004

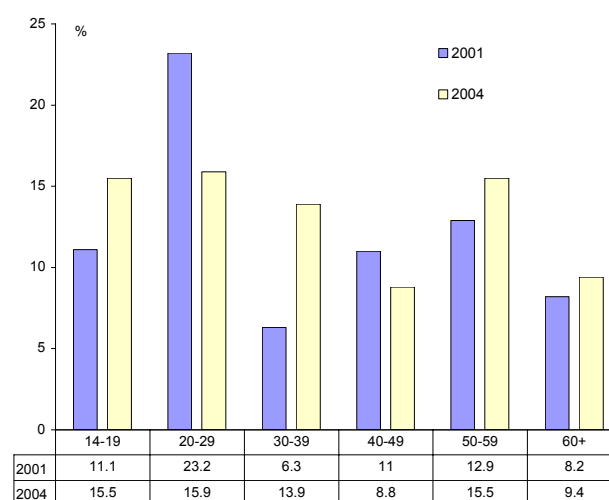
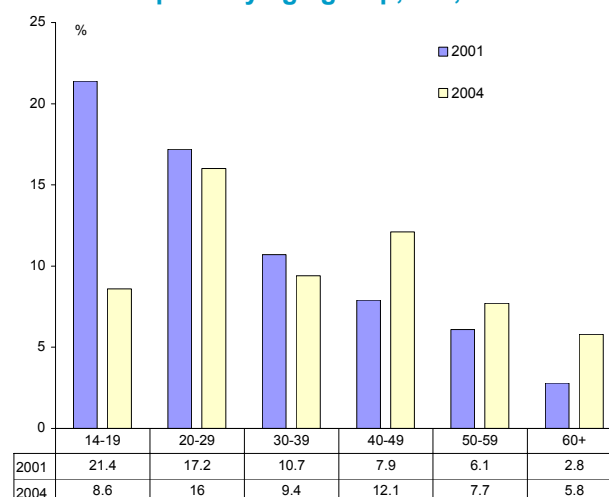


Figure 7
Female long term harm of risky/high risk alcohol consumption by age group, WA, 2001 - 2004



To view or download detailed data tables and figures and a description of the methodology associated with this report go to the Drug and Alcohol Office website here.

This publication is available online at
<http://www.dao.health.wa.gov.au>



Alcohol Prevalence, WA: 2004

Data Tables & Figures

Table A-1
Alcohol drinking status (%) of persons aged 14 years & older by age group & sex, WA, 2004

	14-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	All ages
Males							
Daily	0.7	9.3	14.1	10.5	20.8	28.5	14.8
Weekly	37.8	58.1	58.4	66.0	47.3	36.7	51.7
Less than weekly	29.6	25.8	23.8	19.5	21.3	20.6	23.0
Ex drinker	2.5	4.0	2.2	3.8	4.4	11.0	4.8
Never a full glass	29.5	2.7	1.5	0.1	6.2	3.2	5.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Females							
Daily	-	1.5	1.1	7.3	9.3	11.2	5.6
Weekly	24.5	50.1	46.1	48.9	37.5	37.0	41.8
Less than weekly	55.8	38.1	42.6	31.9	37.0	25.7	36.9
Ex drinker	2.0	5.5	4.7	8.8	6.0	13.4	7.3
Never a full glass	17.6	4.7	5.5	3.2	10.1	12.6	8.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Persons							
Daily	0.3	5.5	7.6	8.8	15.1	19.3	10.1
Weekly	31.3	54.2	52.2	57.4	42.4	36.9	46.7
Less than weekly	42.4	31.9	33.2	25.8	29.1	23.3	30.0
Ex drinker	2.2	4.8	3.5	6.3	5.2	12.3	6.1
Never a full glass	23.7	3.7	3.5	1.7	8.2	8.2	7.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health and Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006, Table 27.

Note: Ex-drinker consumed a full serve of alcohol but not in past year.
2004 result significantly different from 2001 result.
Rates shaded to indicate relative standard error greater than 50%.

Table A-2

Frequency (%) of alcohol consumption as number of standard drinks usually consumed, persons aged 14 years & older by age group, WA, 1995 - 2004

	14-19	20-29	30-39	40+	All ages
1995					
1-2 drinks	29.6	33.1	53.8	64.3	52.6
3-4 drinks	29.9	31.9	25.7	24.2	26.6
5-6 drinks	20.4	15.8	12.1	6.7	11.0
7+ drinks	20.1	19.2	8.3	4.8	9.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1998					
1-2 drinks	32.4	35.5	50.3	61.7	50.8
3-4 drinks	22.9	23.3	34.8	25.2	26.7
5-6 drinks	14.0	13.6	5.9	8.9	9.7
7+ drinks	30.7	27.6	8.9	4.2	12.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2001					
1-2 drinks	26.7	33.5	48.7	62.8	50.5
3-4 drinks	25.4	32.2	32.2	24.4	27.5
5-6 drinks	20.7	18.2	12.0	8.7	12.4
7-10 drinks	14.9	11.3	5.7	2.7	6.2
11+ drinks	12.3	4.7	1.4	1.5	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2004					
1-2 drinks	35.6	29.7	48.3	60.6	50.2
3-4 drinks	19.7	25.5	30.8	27.8	27.2
5-6 drinks	15.2	22.0	12.9	7.5	11.9
7-10 drinks	13.7	12.5	4.8	3.1	6.1
11+ drinks	15.9	10.4	3.1	1.1	4.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 1998 *National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results*. Canberra, Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2000; 2004 *National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results*. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health and Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006.

Note: Base - those who have consumed alcohol in past year.

2004 result significantly different from 2001 result.

Rates shaded to indicate relative standard error greater than 50%. (Not available for 1995 or 1998.)

To maintain consistency across the four surveys, 1995 and 1998 surveys 'regular' drinker (drank alcohol daily) represented as combined 'daily' and 'weekly' use, 'occasional' drinker (drank less often than daily) represented as 'less than weekly' use and 'not more than one glass of alcohol' represented as 'never a full glass'.

Table A-3

Frequency (%) of risk of long term harm of alcohol consumption, persons aged 14 years & older by age group & sex WA, 2001 - 2004

	Low risk		Risky		High risk		Total risky/high risk	
	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004
Males								
14-19	60.4	52.5	8.4	9.4	2.7	6.1	11.1	15.5
20-29	68.2	77.3	14.4	6.7	8.8	9.2	23.2	15.9
30-39	82.3	82.4	4.6	10.7	1.7	3.3	6.3	13.9
40-49	79.8	87.2	8.6	6.8	2.4	2.0	11.0	8.8
50-59	76.2	73.9	8.5	7.0	4.4	8.4	12.9	15.5
60+	68.8	76.3	5.2	7.1	3.0	2.3	8.2	9.4
All ages	73.4	76.6	8.3	7.9	3.8	5.1	12.2	12.9
Females								
14-19	59.3	71.7	16.6	8.1	4.7	0.5	21.4	8.6
20-29	75.0	73.8	12.2	13.2	4.9	2.7	17.2	16.0
30-39	75.3	80.5	8.7	6.4	2.0	2.9	10.7	9.4
40-49	80.6	76.0	6.9	9.2	1.0	2.8	7.9	12.1
50-59	69.0	76.2	4.9	6.2	1.2	1.5	6.1	7.7
60+	63.2	68.2	2.4	5.0	0.4	0.8	2.8	5.8
All ages	71.2	74.4	8.2	8.0	2.2	1.9	10.4	9.9
Persons								
14-19	59.9	61.9	12.3	8.8	3.7	3.4	15.9	12.2
20-29	71.6	75.6	13.3	9.9	6.9	6.0	20.2	15.9
30-39	78.5	81.4	6.9	8.5	1.8	3.1	8.7	11.6
40-49	80.1	81.5	7.8	8.0	1.8	2.4	9.6	10.5
50-59	72.6	75.0	6.7	6.6	2.8	5.0	9.5	11.6
60+	65.9	72.0	3.7	6.0	1.7	1.5	5.4	7.5
All ages	72.3	75.5	8.3	7.9	3.1	3.5	11.3	11.4

Source: 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health & Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006 (Table 29).

Note: Excludes abstainers.

Rates shaded to indicate relative standard error greater than 50%.

Long term alcohol consumption risk levels (as standard drinks consumed in a usual drinking week)

Male: Low risk = consumption of up to 28 standard drinks/week, risky = 29 to 42 standard drinks/week, high risk = 43 or more standard drinks/week.

Female: Low risk = consumption of up to 14 standard drinks per week, risky = 15 to 28 standard drinks/week, high risk = 29 or more standard drinks/week.

Table A-4

Frequency (%) of alcohol drinking status (%) of persons aged 14 years & older by Index of Relative Social Disadvantage (IRSD), WA, 2004

	Daily	Weekly	Less than weekly	Ex-drinker	Never a full glass
Least disadvantaged	18.8	22.6	17.4	11.9	19.2
Quintile 2	17.2	21.2	20.0	14.6	19.4
Quintile 3	24.4	20.4	20.2	14.9	18.9
Quintile 4	21.6	17.3	#	20.1	35.7
Most disadvantaged	18.0	18.6	#	22.3	#
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: Western Australia results. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health and Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006 (Table 19).

Note: Ex-drinker consumed a full serve of alcohol but not in past year.

2004 result significantly different from 2001 result.

Rates shaded to indicate relative standard error greater than 50%.

Table A-5

Frequency (%) of short term risky and high risk alcohol consumption, persons aged 14 years & older by age group & sex WA, 2001 - 2004

	Risky and high risk						Total risky/high risk	
	At least yearly		At least monthly		At least weekly		2001	2004
	2001	2004	2001	2004	2001	2004		
Males								
14-19	13.7	4.4	22.6	11.6	10.5	22.2	46.8	38.2
20-29	20.0	23.6	29.4	23.9	21.5	21.9	70.9	69.4
30-39	24.8	24.1	25.3	24.5	7.0	11.1	57.0	59.7
40-49	17.2	24.0	15.5	15.6	7.4	8.0	40.1	47.6
50-59	8.9	11.7	7.6	10.0	10.8	10.4	27.3	32.1
60+	3.0	7.1	5.8	5.4	4.3	5.3	13.2	17.9
All ages	14.9	16.7	17.7	15.5	10.2	12.5	42.7	44.7
Females								
14-19	15.6	11.4	22.5	24.2	15.0	8.5	53.1	44.0
20-29	18.9	22.8	30.8	26.4	11.9	11.7	61.6	60.0
30-39	16.9	21.9	13.9	13.1	5.4	6.4	36.2	41.4
40-49	15.5	22.4	9.0	7.5	4.4	7.4	29.0	37.3
50-59	7.2	10.7	5.6	3.6	3.9	3.0	16.6	17.4
60+	2.5	5.3	1.5	0.9	1.2	2.3	5.2	8.5
All ages	12.7	15.9	13.4	11.5	6.4	6.3	32.5	33.7
Persons								
14-19	14.6	7.8	22.5	17.7	12.6	15.5	49.8	41.0
20-29	19.5	23.2	30.1	25.2	16.7	16.9	66.2	65.2
30-39	20.5	23.0	19.1	18.8	6.1	8.7	45.6	50.5
40-49	16.5	23.2	12.6	11.5	6.0	7.7	35.1	42.4
50-59	8.0	11.2	6.6	6.9	7.4	6.7	22.1	24.8
60+	2.8	6.2	3.5	3.0	2.7	3.7	8.9	12.9
All ages	13.8	16.3	15.5	13.5	8.3	9.4	37.6	39.1

Source: 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey. Western Australia results. Perth, Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health & Drug & Alcohol Office, 2006 (Table 30).

Note: Excludes abstainers and low risk drinkers.

Rates shaded to indicate relative standard error greater than 50%.

Short term alcohol consumption risk levels (as standard drinks consumed on a usual drinking day)

Male: Risky and high risk = consumption of 7 or more standard drinks on any one day.

Female: Risky and high risk = consumption of 5 or more standard drinks on any one day.

Methodology

There have been a total of eight National Drug Strategy Household Surveys (NDSHS) conducted between 1985 and 2004.

The NDSHS involves random household selection from a national sample plus a mixture of random and targeted respondent selection. All surveys have involved personal interviews, since 1988 self completion booklets and from 2001 computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI).

Sample coverage and methodology has varied over the surveys. The 1985 survey used a quota sampling technique whereas later surveys have used random samples. The 1985, 1988 and 1991 surveys were of urban centres with populations of 5,000 or more, while subsequent surveys were stratified by census collector districts (CCDs).

The size of national samples for surveys has varied, with samples of 2,791 in 1985, 2,255 in 1988, 2,850 in 1991, 3,500 in 1993, 3,850 in 1995, 10,030 in 1998, 26,744 in 2001 and 28,582 in 2004.

Small sample sizes mean that a breakdown is not available for some WA data for the surveys between 1985 and 1993, whereas since the 1995 survey more comprehensive analyses at the State level have been possible due to improved sampling.

Estimates used in this report are subject to sampling variability and are considered reliable if the relative standard error (RSE) is less than 25%, whereas estimates between 25% and 50% should be interpreted with caution and estimates with RSEs over 50% should be considered unreliable. Accordingly, for some of the drugs reported in this publication, a breakdown of estimates by age group and sex has not been undertaken.

A detailed discussion of these issues is contained in the explanatory notes that accompany the report of the 2004 NDSHS, *2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: First results*. AIHW Cat. No PHE 57. Canberra, Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2005.

The definitions of level of risk from alcohol consumption used in the 2004 report are based on National Health & Medical Research Council's publication - *Australian alcohol guidelines: health risks and benefits*, published in October 2001. (Copies of this report can be obtained from the NHMRC's website - www.nhmrc.gov.au.)

Long term consumption

Long term alcohol consumption risk levels are based on the number of standard drinks consumed in a usual drinking week and vary according to sex.

Males: low risk = consumption of up to 28 standard drinks/week, risky = 29 to 42 standard drinks/week, high risk = 43 or more standard drinks/week.

Females: low risk = consumption of up to 14 standard drinks/week, risky = 15 to 28 standard drinks/week, high risk = 29 or more standard drinks/week.

Short term consumption

Short term alcohol consumption risk levels are based on the number of standard drinks consumed on a usual drinking day and vary according to sex.

Males: risky and high risk = consumption of 7 or more standard drinks on any one day.

Females: risky and high risk = consumption of 5 or more standard drinks on any one day.

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