

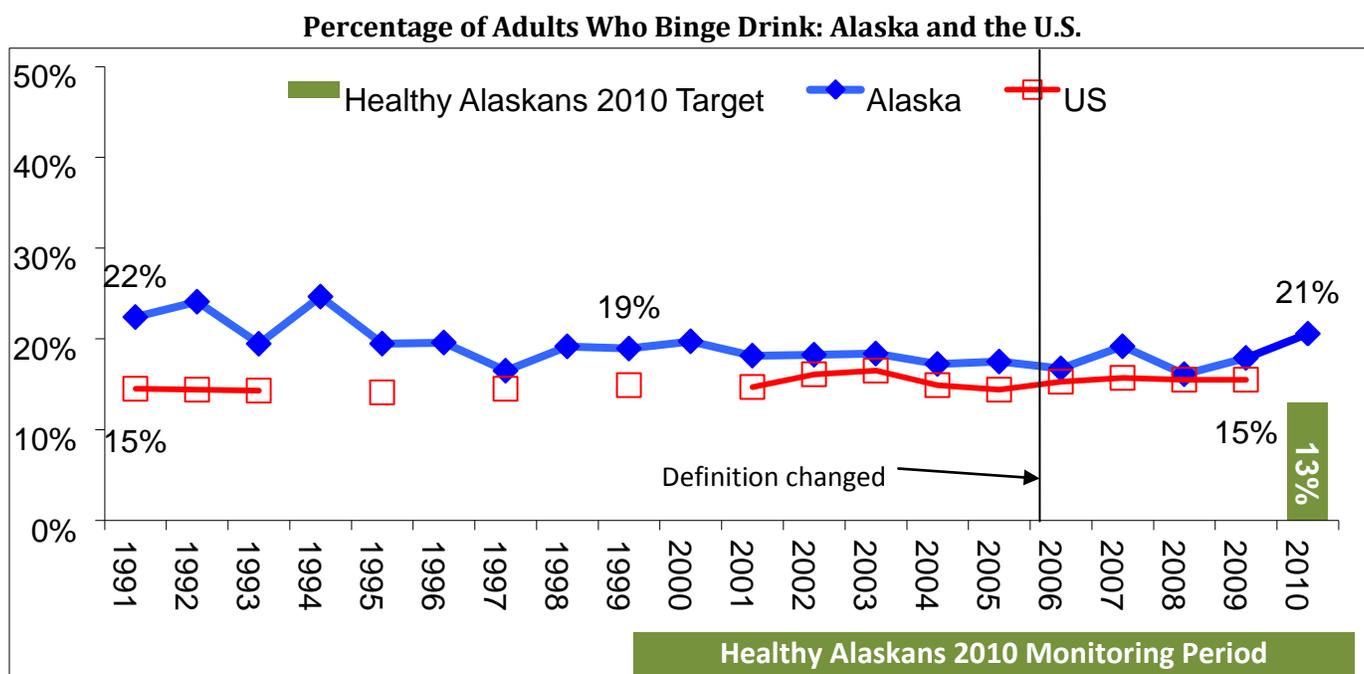
Alaska Health Status Indicators

Indicator: Adult Binge Drinking

Why is this important?

Immediate effects of excessive alcohol use are often the result of binge drinking; they include increased risk of unintentional injuries, violence, high risk sexual behaviors and alcohol poisoning. Binge drinking by pregnant women increases the risk of miscarriage and stillbirth; alcohol use during pregnancy causes physical and mental birth defects. Most people who binge drink are not alcohol dependent.¹ Alcohol abuse has severe consequences in Alaska. Mortality rates for alcohol and alcohol-related injuries are among the highest rates in the nation. In 2008, approximately one of every 10 Native deaths was alcohol induced. From 2004-2008, 43% of suicides had either proven or suspected alcohol intoxication preceding the event, of which one-third had a known alcohol dependency or problem. Of the hospitalizations due to injury reported to the Alaska Trauma Registry (ATR), nearly 25% of all hospitalized injury patients were suspected or proven alcohol-related injuries.²

How are we doing?



The percentage of adults who binge drink has fluctuated slightly over the past 2 decades, ranging from a high of 25% in 1994 to a low of 16% in 2008.

❖ How is Alaska Doing Relative to the *Healthy Alaskans 2010* Target?

The *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target for the prevalence of adult binge drinking is 13% or lower. Adult binge drinking prevalence has been between 16% and 21% during the *Healthy Alaskans 2010* monitoring period. **The *Healthy Alaskans 2010* target of 13% has not been met.**

❖ How does AK compare with the US?

The Alaska adult binge drinking rate has consistently been slightly higher than the US rate.

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❖ How are different populations affected?

The prevalence of binge drinking is higher among men (23%) than women (12%). Alaskans over the age of 64 are less likely to binge drink (5%) than Alaskan adults in other age groups (14% to 26%). Asian and Pacific Islander adults have a lower binge drinking prevalence (4%) than any other racial/ethnic group in Alaska (ranging from 16% to 19%). There are no other racial/ethnic differences in binge drinking prevalence, and no differences by region, education, or income level. (Source: 2009 BRFSS.)

What is the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services doing to improve this indicator?

The two primary objectives chosen by the Alaska Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG) Advisory Committee are to reduce youth alcohol use (e.g., lifetime, current, heavy and binge drinking) and adult alcohol abuse (e.g., heavy and binge drinking). The SPF SIG Strategic Plan³ identifies four key strategies: (1) Enhance the Alaska prevention workforce; (2) Develop regional/community capacity to promote prevention principles and strategies; (3) Increase the understanding and use of community coalitions and environmental strategies to accomplish sustainable community change; and (4) Increase regional/community understanding and use of data to drive decision-making, implementation, evaluation and continuous quality improvement of strategies and interventions.

Indicator Definition and Notes

Percentage of men aged 18 years and older who consumed five or more drinks on one occasion or the percentage of women aged 18 and older who consumed four or more drinks on one occasion within the past 30 day period (definition from 2006 through current), determined from responses to the following set of questions:

- *During the past 30 days, have you had at least one drink of any alcoholic beverage such as beer, wine, a malt beverage or liquor?*
- *Considering all types of alcoholic beverages, how many times during the past 30 days did you have X (X = 5 for men, X = 4 for women) or more drinks on an occasion?*

From 1991 through 2005 the following definition was used, based on the same set of questions: Percentage of adults (men and women) aged 18 years and older who consumed five or more drinks on one occasion within the past 30 day period.

Data Sources

Alaska: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services; US: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Alaska data were obtained from the Standard AK BRFSS from 1991 through 2003, 2005 through 2007, and 2009 through 2010, and from the Standard and Supplemental AK BRFSS surveys combined in 2004 and 2008. The Supplemental BRFSS survey is conducted using identical methodology as the Standard BRFSS and allows a doubling of the BRFSS sample size for those measures included on both surveys.

References

1. CDC Fact Sheet. *Alcohol Use and Health*. <http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm> (printed 5/5/11)
2. Medline Plus. *Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse*. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000944.htm> (printed 5/5/11).
3. AK DHSS/DBH/Prevention and Early Intervention. *Moving Prevention Upstream, January 2011*. http://hss.state.ak.us/dbh/prevention/programs/spfsig/pdfs/SPFSIG_AlaskaStrategicPlan.pdf



Available at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/>

