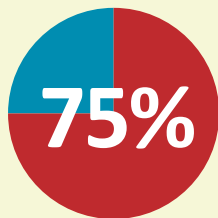


Young Women, Alcohol and Pregnancy

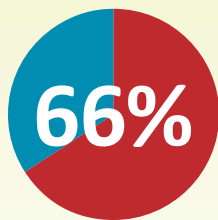
Information for Service Providers



Alcohol use during pregnancy is strongly related to alcohol use before pregnancy. Rather than narrowly focusing on changing women's behaviours during pregnancy, FASD prevention efforts can support women's health across the lifespan, starting with girls and young women. For example, service providers can support young women in learning more about low-risk drinking guidelines and potential short- and long-term harms and risks of alcohol use.



75% of young women ages 15-24 drink alcohol



66% of young women ages 15-24 have had sex at least once

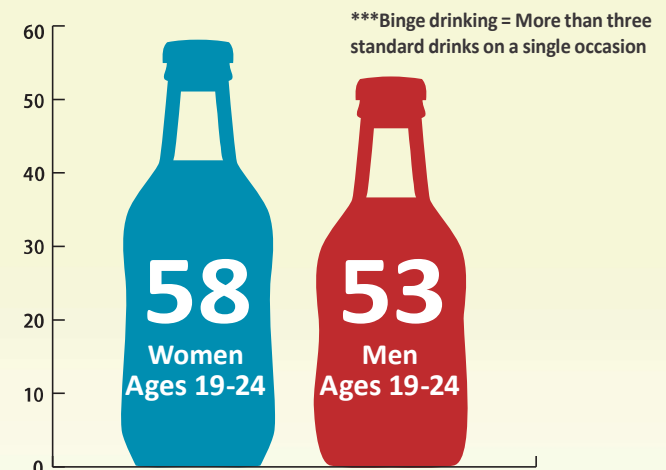
Women's bodies break down alcohol differently because:

1. Women have less water in their bodies to help dilute the alcohol in their blood streams.
2. Women's bodies absorb alcohol at a slower rate.
3. Women have lower levels of a particular enzyme that breaks down alcohol in their bodies.

Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines

To minimize the risk of harms from drinking, Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines suggest women and men follow daily and weekly limits.

- Have no more than 2 standard drinks on most days (3 for men).
- Have no more than 3 standard drinks on any single occasion (4 for men).
- Have no more than 10 standard drinks per week (15 for men).



The rate of binge drinking in women ages 19-24 is increasing and is higher than any other age group of women and higher than in men of the same age.

Making Healthy Choices

Service providers can offer young women the opportunity to consider how much they drink, why they drink, and to make healthy and well informed choices about alcohol use:

- What is my relationship with alcohol?
- When do I drink? When I'm stressed? Sad? Tired?
- How do I know my limit?
- Do I feel comfortable telling friends that I might not feel like drinking?

References

1. Stockwell T, Sturge J, S M. *Patterns of Risky Alcohol Use in British Columbia: Results of the 2004 Canadian Addiction Survey*. Centre for Addictions Research of BC Bulletin: Centre for Addictions Research of BC (CARBC); 2007.
2. Health Canada. *Canadian Alcohol and Drug Monitoring Survey: Summary of Results for 2011*. Ottawa, ON2011 [cited 2014 February 17]; Available from: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/drugs-drogues/stat/_2011/summary-sommaire-eng.php#a9.
3. Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. *Canada's Low Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines*. Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse: Ottawa: ON, 2011. Available from: www.ccsa.ca