

Alcohol: WOMEN VS. MEN

How often women tend to drink and what happens to their bodies when they do is different when compared to men.

- Self-report surveys of men and women in the United States show that alcohol use is more prevalent among men than women.
- Men are more likely than women to become alcohol dependent.
- Binge drinking (i.e., consumption of five or more drinks per occasion on 5 or more days in the past month) is most common among women ages 18 to 25.
- Among racial groups, women's drinking is more prevalent among whites, although black women are more likely to drink heavily.
- Women absorb and metabolize alcohol differently than men.
- Women generally have less body water than men of similar body weight, so that women achieve higher concentrations of alcohol in the blood after drinking equivalent amounts of alcohol.
- Women DO appear to eliminate alcohol from the blood faster than men.
- This finding may be explained by women's higher liver volume per unit lean body mass, because alcohol is metabolized almost entirely in the liver.

Ability to Dilute Alcohol

WOMEN: Average Total Body Water: 52%

MEN: Average Total Body Water: 61%

Ability to Metabolize Alcohol

WOMEN: Have a smaller quantity of dehydrogenase, an enzyme that breaks down alcohol.

MEN: Have a larger quantity of dehydrogenase, which allows them to break down the alcohol they take in more quickly.

Hormonal Factors, Part 1

WOMEN: Premenstrual hormonal changes cause intoxication to set in faster during the days right before a woman gets her period.

MEN: Their susceptibility to getting drunk does not fluctuate dramatically at certain times of the month.

Hormonal Factors, Part 2

WOMEN: Alcohol increases estrogen levels. Birth control pills or other medicine with estrogen increase intoxication.

MEN: Alcohol also increases estrogen levels in men. Chronic alcoholism has been associated with loss of body hair and muscle mass, development of swollen breasts and shrunken testicles, and impotence.

Source: NIAAA

Source: www.factsontap.org