HHS' CDC Reports on Binge Drinking Prevalence, Frequency and Intensity Among Adults

According to the report, more than half of the alcohol adults drink is consumed while binge drinking and more than 90% of the alcohol young people drink is while binge drinking.

Binge drinking accounts for more than half of the estimated 80,000 average annual deaths and three quarters of $223.5 billion in economic costs resulting from excessive alcohol consumption in the United States.

CDC analyzed data collected in 2010 on the prevalence of binge drinking (defined as four or more drinks for women and five or more drinks for men on an occasion during the past 30 days) among U.S. adults aged =18 years in 48 states and the District of Columbia; and on the frequency (average number of episodes per month) and intensity (average largest number of drinks consumed on occasion) among binge drinkers.

The overall prevalence of binge drinking was 17.1%. Among binge drinkers, the frequency of binge drinking was 4.4 episodes per month, and the intensity was 7.9 drinks on occasion. Binge drinking prevalence (28.2%) and intensity (9.3 drinks) were highest among persons aged 18–24 years. Frequency was highest among binge drinkers aged =65 years (5.5 episodes per month). Respondents with household incomes =$75,000 had the highest binge drinking prevalence (20.2%), but those with household incomes <$25,000 had the highest frequency (5.0 episodes per month) and intensity (8.5 drinks on occasion). The age-adjusted prevalence of binge drinking in states ranged from 10.9% to 25.6%, and the age-adjusted intensity ranged from 6.0 to 9.0 drinks on occasion. Binge drinking is reported by one in six U.S. adults, and those who binge drink tend to do so frequently and with high intensity.

Binge drinking, among other things, can lead to unplanned pregnancy, the spread of STDs, SIDS, and – of course – alcohol dependence. Excessive alcohol consumption in men increases the risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, and colon. Women are more vulnerable to brain, heart, and liver damage.

For more information visit www.cdc.gov