

Research Reveals Men Are More Likely to Binge Drink Than Women, With Men More Prone to Drinking Alone at Home

This *Men's Health Week*, [Drinkaware](#) says it's time to talk about men and the impact of excessive alcohol consumption on men's health.

Latest findings from the [Drinkaware Barometer 2023*](#) find that:

- 3 in 10 (32%) male drinkers “typically” engage in binge drinking when they drink compared with 2 in 10 women (19%)
- Almost 4 in 10 (38%) male drinkers consume alcohol alone at home at least once a week compared with 26% of female drinkers
- 6 in 10 (59%) male drinkers cite drinking for coping reasons compared with 5 in 10 (50%) women

Overall, the data for the past several years has consistently shown that men tend to engage in harmful drinking patterns more than women. The research shows that 3 in 10 (32%) male drinkers typically binge drink when they have drunk alcohol in the past 30 days, compared with 2 in 10 (19%) women. Binge drinking is consuming 6 or more standard drinks in one sitting. A standard drink is a half pint of beer (4.5% lager), a small glass of wine (100ml of 12.5% strength) or a pub measure of spirits (40%).

This data also reveals that men are most likely to report drinking at home alone, with four in ten (38%) male drinkers doing so in 2023. This is potentially worrying, especially given misunderstandings of how much one consumes when at home. In a mixed-methods study (Cook et al. 2023) conducted prior to COVID-19, solitary home drinking was regarded as more socially acceptable for men than women and reflective of a lack of opportunity to drink with others as well as associated with more harmful regular patterns of alcohol use.

With 55% of adults citing that they drink for coping reasons, this figure peaks at 59% amongst males compared with 50% of women. [Drinkaware](#) wants to highlight that men prone to anxiety and low mood should be vigilant when it comes to alcohol consumption.

However, just as harmful trends heighten amongst male drinkers, so too do positive changes to behaviour. What has emerged from the research is that a higher percentage of men state that they would like to drink alcohol less often with 4 in 10 (39%) men in 2023, compared with 3 in 10 (32%) women. 1 in 2 of the men who reported drinking less in 2023 agree that they are more conscious now about the health harms of alcohol.

This Men's Health Week, [Drinkaware](#) want to highlight the many benefits to men in cutting back and exploring a sober curious lifestyle. Men who reduce their alcohol consumption can expect to sleep

better, have better overall levels of fitness, many experience weight loss, better mood and reduced anxiety.

The impact of excessive drinking extends beyond the traditional beer-belly associated with excess alcohol and can cause serious and long-term harm impacting cardiovascular health, sexual health, relationships and causing financial strain.

It is important to begin with awareness of the facts and to monitor the amount of alcohol being consumed. The [HSE Low Risk Weekly Alcohol Guidelines](#) for adults are:

- **Men:** Less than 17 standard drinks (170g pure alcohol) spread out over the week, with at least two alcohol-free days.
- **Women:** Less than 11 standard drinks (110g pure alcohol) spread out over the week, with at least two alcohol-free days.

Dearbhla O'Brien, CEO of Drinkaware commented:

“As always, data around alcohol is complex and often contradictory. However, data is showing a consistency of harmful drinking patterns peaking amongst males and it is important to understand this in order to reach men “where they are at”. This Men’s Health Week, we want to encourage men to evaluate their relationship with alcohol and support them in making more informed and healthier choices by highlighting the benefits of a more moderate approach.

It’s crucial for men to understand the harmful consequences of excessive alcohol consumption and we want to encourage men to examine their own drinking habits and drink within or below the HSE’s low risk weekly alcohol guidelines. By heightening awareness of preventable health problems for males of all ages during Men’s Health Week, we can support men to talk about their problems and to [access the help](#) that’s needed.

Encouraging men to prioritise their overall health and well-being through balanced diets, regular exercise and moderate alcohol intake can contribute to a longer and happier life. For information, research and data on alcohol including tips on how to moderate alcohol consumption, visit [drinkaware.ie](#).”

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

***The Drinkaware Barometer 2023** is a national population-based survey of 1,000 adults aged 18+ conducted by **IPSOS B&A** in July/August 2023 and included a series of internationally recognised modules relating to alcohol consumption and mental health.

For more information on research projects and publications visit www.drinkaware.ie/research

About Drinkaware:

Drinkaware is the national and independent charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol misuse in Ireland, governed by an independent board and regulated by the Charities Regulator. Registered Charity Number: 20204601

For all enquiries, contact:

Noirin Byrne | Head of Communications | communications@drinkaware.ie | 087 7802674

Alex Ainsworth | Digital Media & Communications Officer | campaigns@drinkaware.ie | 087 1425055