



Understanding Older Adult Alcohol-Related Falls in Wisconsin

Falls
Free[®]
Wisconsin

wiha
Wisconsin Institute
for Healthy Aging

Today's Speakers:

Maureen Busalacchi

Wisconsin Alcohol Policy Project (WisAPP)

Elaina Andreychak

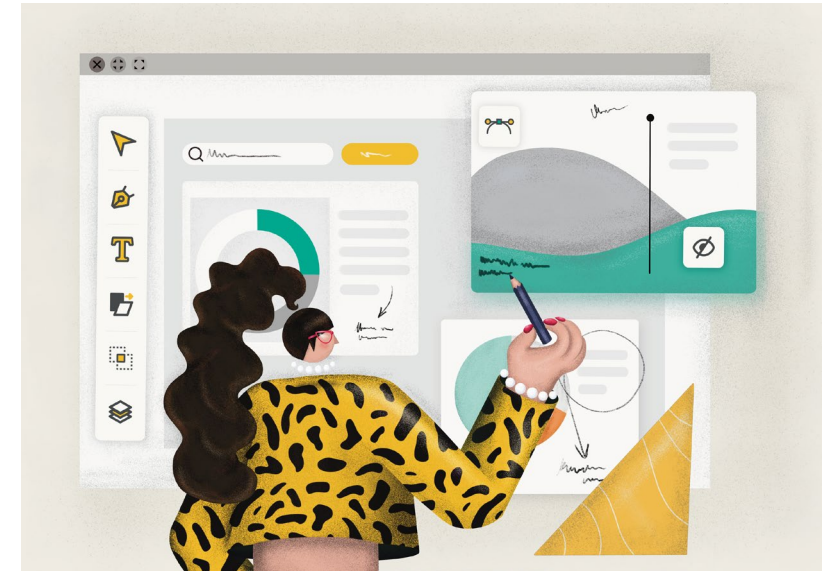
Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Dr. Ben Weston

Medical College of Wisconsin

Suzanne Morley

Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging



Welcome...

Maureen Busalacchi

Director

Division of Alcohol Policy, Prevention and Research

Wisconsin Alcohol Policy Project (WisAPP)

Comprehensive Injury Center

Medical College of Wisconsin



knowledge changing life





knowledge changing life

FALLS FREE COALITION: IMPACT OF ALCOHOL



January 30, 2025

*Maureen Busalacchi, Director, Division of Alcohol Policy, Prevention and Research
WI Alcohol Policy Project (WisAPP)
Comprehensive Injury Center
Medical College of Wisconsin*

WISCONSIN ALCOHOL POLICY PROJECT

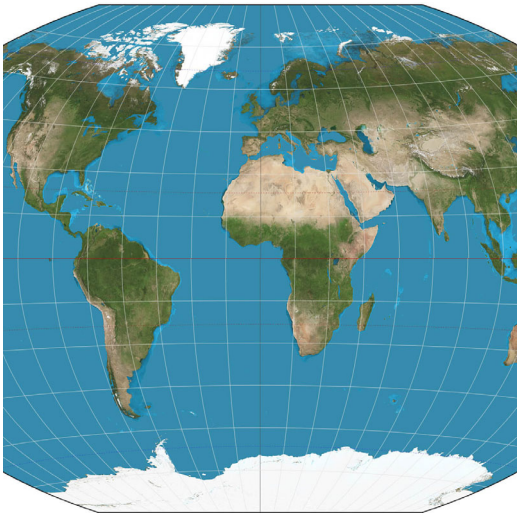


Tools, Training, & Technical Assistance to Reduce
Excessive Alcohol Consumption

ALCOHOL IS A MAJOR CAUSE OF DEATH WORLD-WIDE

3,000,000

Deaths/Year
Worldwide



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

140,000

Deaths/Year
In United States



3,197

Deaths/Year In
Wisconsin



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POP QUIZ

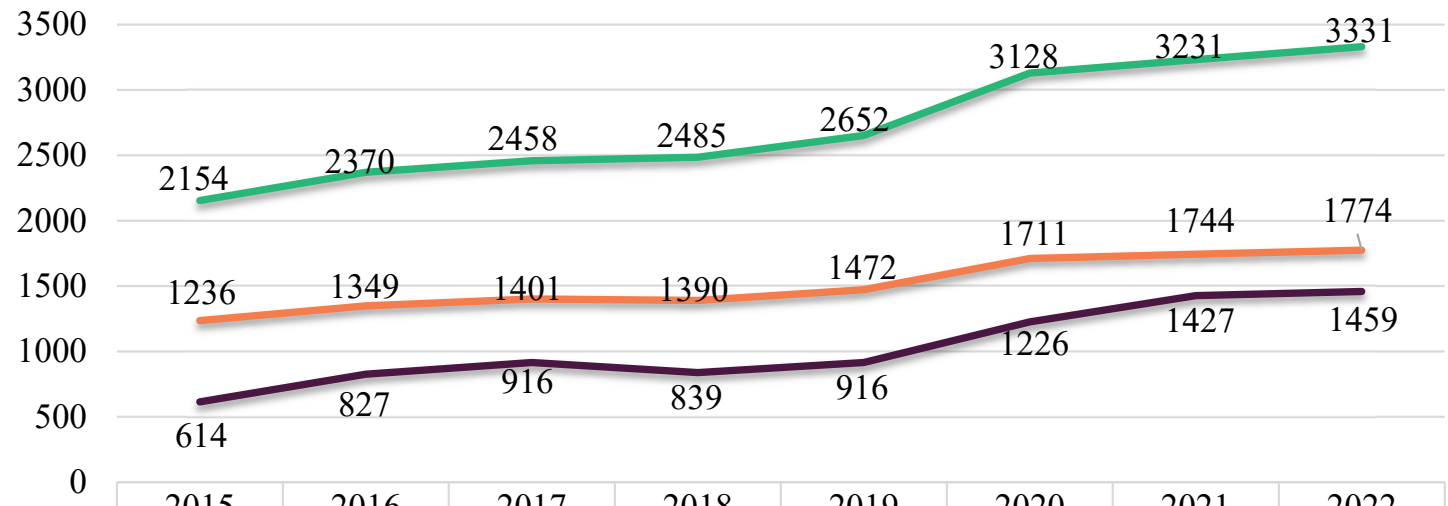
1. What's the number one drug used in Wisconsin?



2. Which is higher: Alcohol or Opioid Deaths

WISCONSIN DEATHS RELATED TO ALCOHOL

Alcohol-Attributable & Opioid Deaths



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
All Alcohol-Attributable Deaths	2154	2370	2458	2485	2652	3128	3231	3331
Acute Deaths	1236	1349	1401	1390	1472	1711	1744	1774
Opioid deaths	614	827	916	839	916	1226	1427	1459

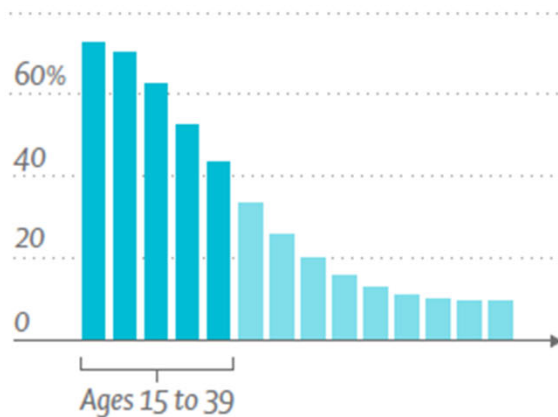
Data from

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/alcohol/deaths-county.htm> and

BURDEN OF ALCOHOL USE CHANGES WITH AGE

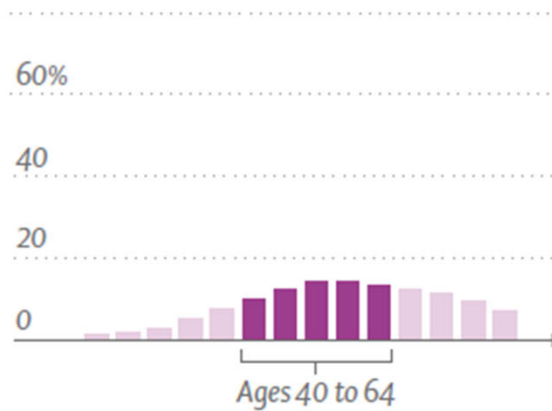
Relative proportions of global disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) for causes associated with alcohol use, by cause and age (2020)

Injury



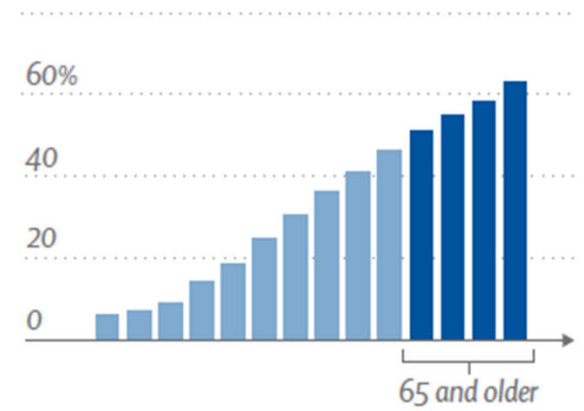
Injuries account for the majority of DALYs lost among individuals aged 15–39 years.

Cancers



The alcohol-attributable burden shifts to chronic health conditions such as cancer in individuals aged 40–64 years.

Heart disease

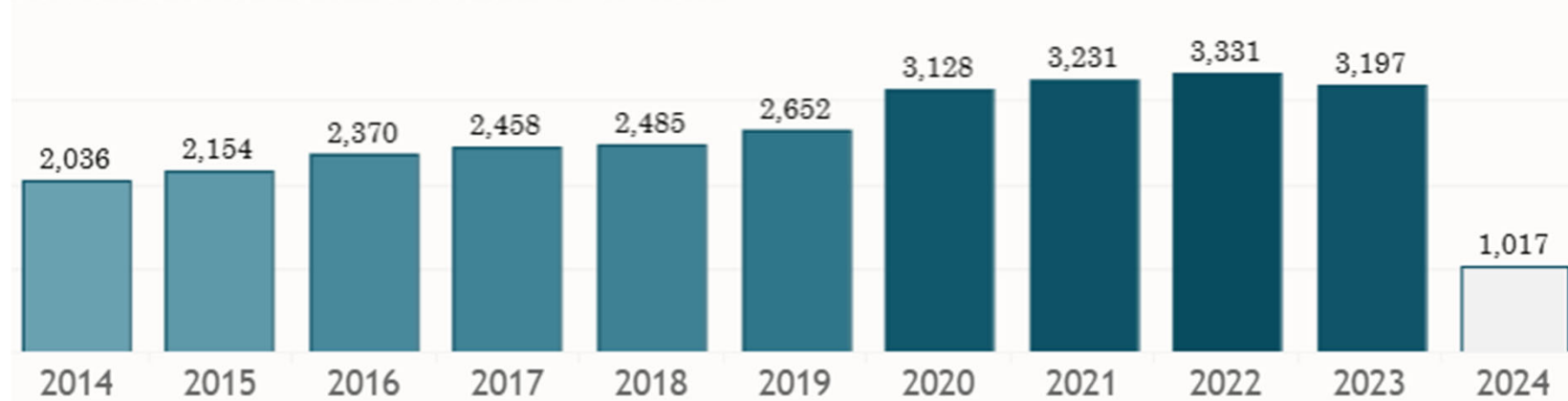


Cardiovascular diseases are the major causes of disease burden among individuals aged 65 years and older.

[Health risks of alcohol \(thelancet.comhttps://www.thelancet.com/infographics-do/alcohol-gbd\)](https://www.thelancet.com/infographics-do/alcohol-gbd)

WISCONSIN ALCOHOL-ATTRIBUTABLE DEATHS

All Alcohol-Attributable Deaths Over Time

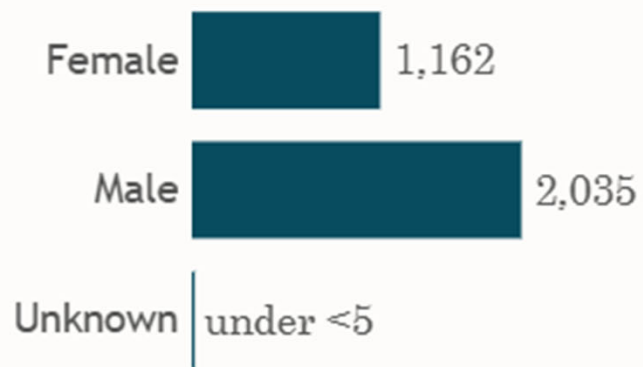


Recommended Citation:

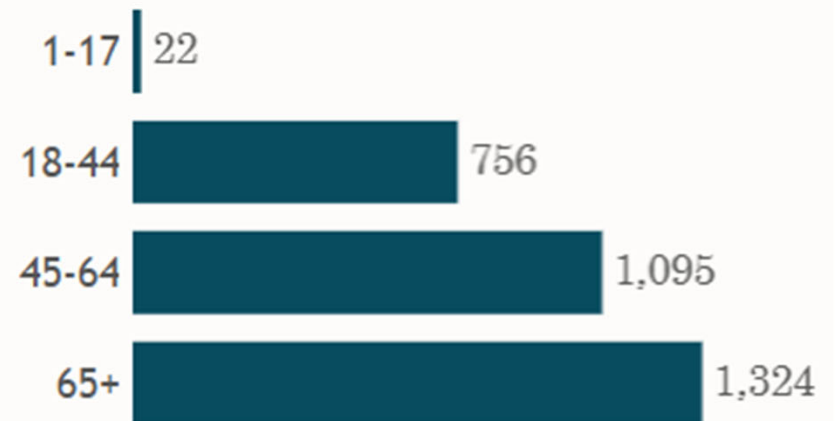
Wisconsin Department of Health Services. DHS Interactive Dashboards: Alcohol Death Module. Last Updated 11/21/2024 1

ALCOHOL ATTRIBUTABLE DEATHS 41% OVER 65

All Alcohol-Attributable Deaths by Sex (2023)



All Alcohol-Attributable Deaths by Age (2023)



ALCOHOL-RELATED HARMS



The number of alcohol-related ER visits in Wisconsin have
gone up by 70%
from 2011 - 2021
especially among females and middle-aged or older
people who drink




#wisapp #ProofIsInTheNumbers





**Prescription Opioid
Deaths Involve
Alcohol**

#ProofIsInTheNumbers #AlcoholAwarenessMonth

ALCOHOL-RELATED HARMS






Nearly 15%
of Breast Cancer Deaths
among U.S. women were linked to
Alcohol Consumption

#ProofsInTheNumbers #AlcoholAwarenessMonth

**Alcohol-linked death rates
for women
have increased
85%**



#AlcoholAwarenessMonth

BOTTOM LINE:

Excessive Alcohol Use is

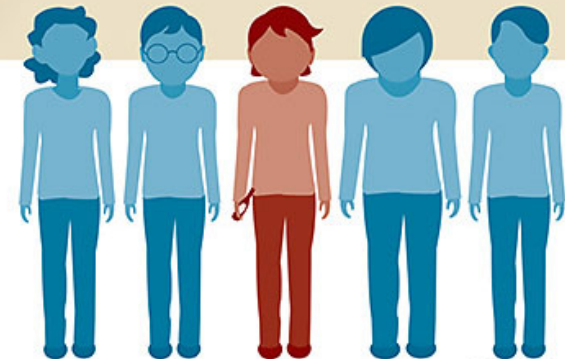
- An epidemic that kills people of all ages
- Causes injury & disability

It Requires

- A public health response
- Using evidence-informed strategies

Evidence-based alcohol policies can prevent premature deaths

1 in **5** deaths among US adults ages 20-49 is from **excessive alcohol use**



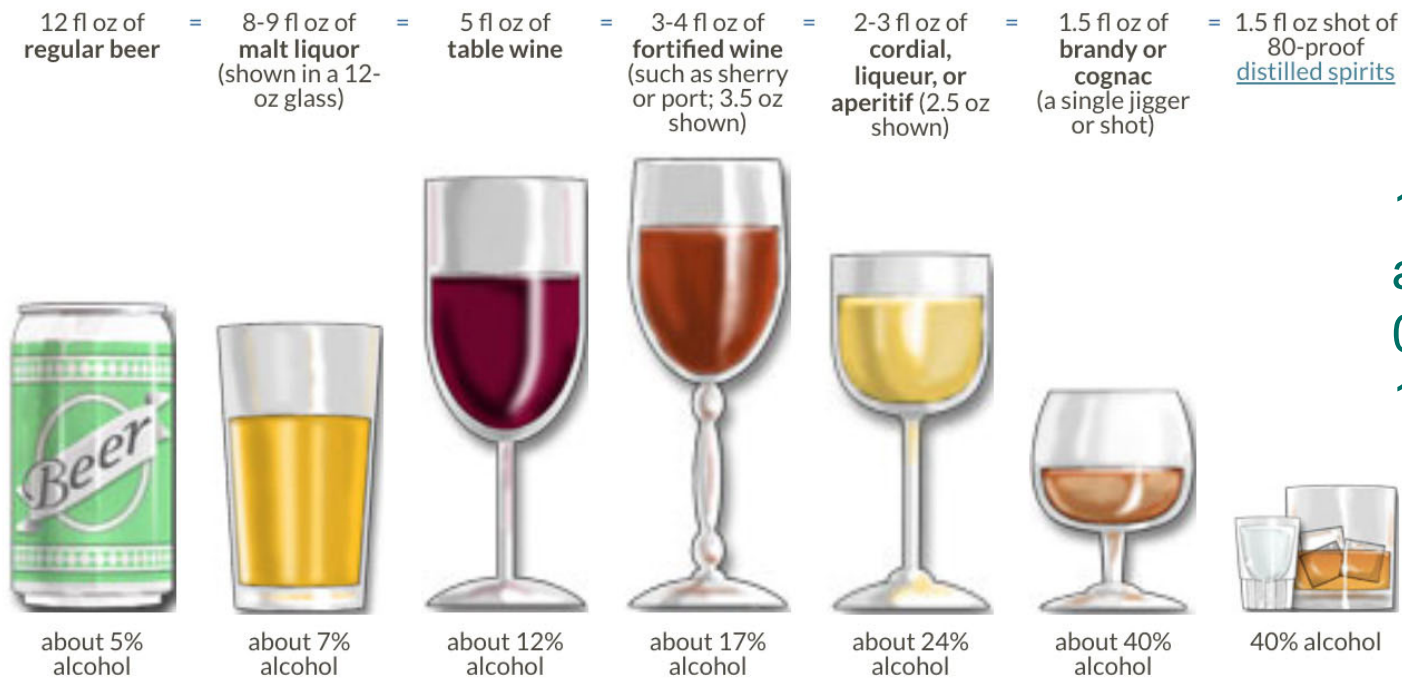
[cdc.gov/alcohol](https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol)

WHAT IS EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL USE?



Source: "Excessive Alcohol Use" National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, July 11, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/alcohol.htm> on 7/18/23

“JUST ONE” STANDARD DRINK CONTAINS:



14 grams pure alcohol
0.6 fluid ounces
1.2 tablespoons

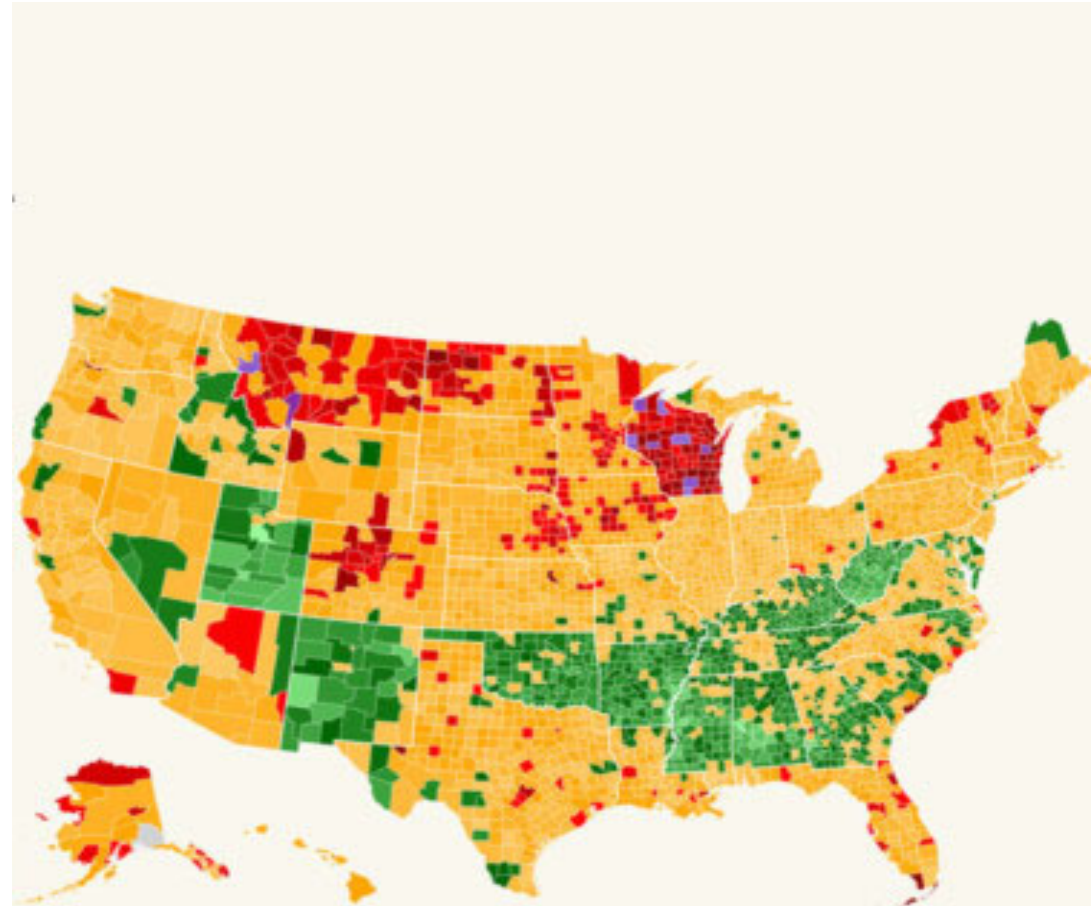


(from <https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/>)

LEADING THE NATION?

Wisconsin has the highest percentage of excess drinkers on a state-wide basis (25.29 percent), and Utah has the lowest (12.41 percent).

[HTTPS://VINEPAIR.COM/BOOZE-NEWS/MAP-DRUNKEST-AND-DRIEST-COUNTIES-AMERICA/](https://vinepair.com/booze-news/map-drunkest-and-driest-counties-america/)



HTTPS://WWW.MCW.EDU/WISAPP



Understanding the Problem

Defined as binge drinking, heavy drinking, underage drinking, and drinking while pregnant, the impact of excessive alcohol use ripples throughout society, impacts violence and injury, and negatively impacts the economy.

[LEARN MORE >](#)



Policies & Procedures

WisAPP provides comprehensive reporting that covers recommendations for misuse of alcohol in Wisconsin, resources for learning about alcohol to go, alcohol visibility, and provisions municipalities can establish on government property.

[LEARN MORE >](#)



Compliance & Enforcement

Alcohol misuse has detrimental impacts on health, brain development, and public safety, but there are safeguards in place by policy makers, and enforcement is critical from server to seller.

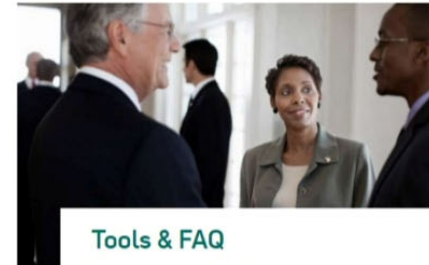
[LEARN MORE >](#)



Licensing & Permits

Alcohol licensing resources for communities to ensure safety, security, and common courtesy for neighboring businesses and residences, including information about municipal alcohol retail licenses.

[LEARN MORE >](#)

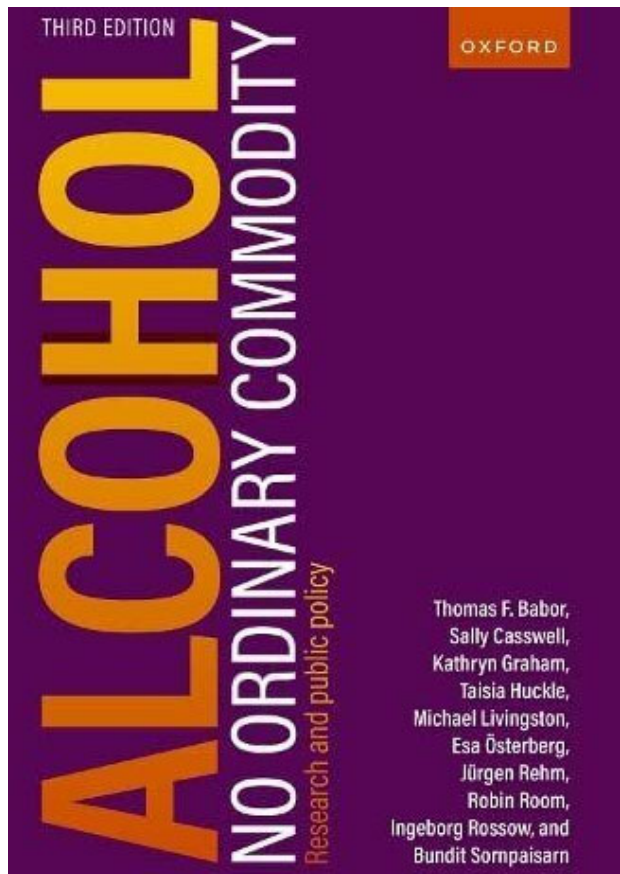











Tools & FAQ

WisAPP provides tools in the form of data, information, and strategies to help communities to work together to prevent excessive alcohol use, and training can be requested on a variety of alcohol topics.

[LEARN MORE >](#)

RESOURCES ON EFFECTIVE POLICIES



Electronic Screening and Brief Intervention (e-SBI)	 Recommended (strong evidence) August 2012
Enhanced Enforcement of Laws Prohibiting Sales to Minors	 Recommended (sufficient evidence) February 2006
Increasing Alcohol Taxes	 Recommended (strong evidence) June 2007
Maintaining Limits on Days of Sale	 Recommended (strong evidence) June 2008
Maintaining Limits on Hours of Sale	 Recommended (sufficient evidence) February 2009
Overservice Law Enforcement Initiatives	 Insufficient Evidence March 2010
Privatization of Retail Alcohol Sales	 Recommended Against April 2011
Regulation of Alcohol Outlet Density	 Recommended (sufficient evidence) February 2007
Responsible Beverage Service Training	 Insufficient Evidence October 2010

The Community Guide

 [@CPSTF](#)
 (404) 498-1827
 communityguide@cdc.gov

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SCAODA REPORT OFFERS STRATEGIES

Moving Forward: Policies and Strategies to Prevent and Reduce Excessive Alcohol Use in Wisconsin



Analysis and Recommendations for Addressing and Reducing Excessive Alcohol Use in Wisconsin

DECEMBER 2021

Wisconsin State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
Prevention Committee
Alcohol Prevention Ad-Hoc Workgroup

1. Modify Drinking Environment
2. Increase Cost of Alcohol
3. Reduce Promotion of Alcohol to Youth
4. Reduce Availability of Alcohol
5. Support Evidence-Based Alcohol Education
6. Engage in Preventive Health Care
7. Enact Laws & Regulations
8. Monitor and Evaluate

6 EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES



CDC'S ONLINE ALCOHOL SCREENING

Want to check
your alcohol use?

This quick assessment can
help you check.

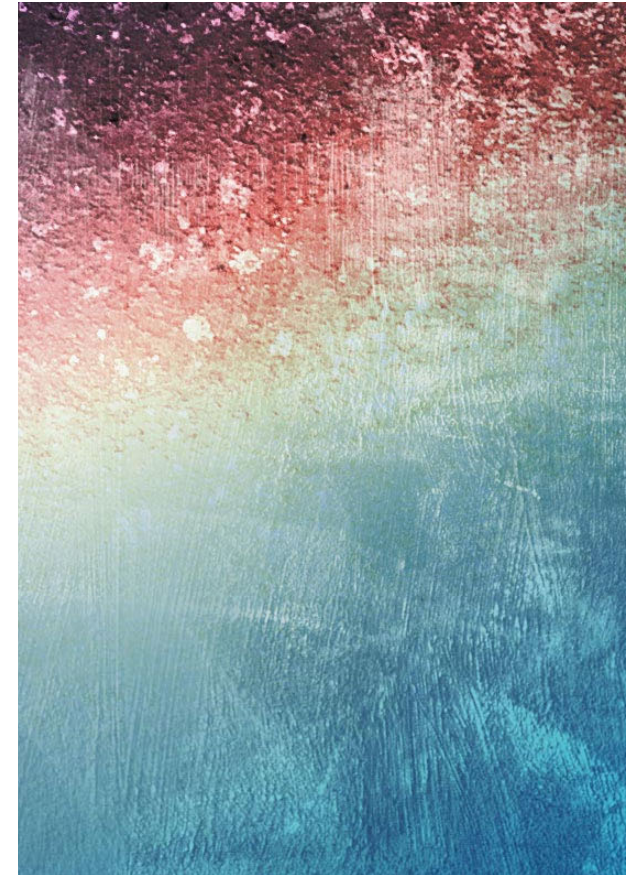
Visit <https://bit.ly/3PdwBjj>



THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS? MAUREEN BUSALACCHI MBUSALACCHI@MCW.EDU

COMPREHENSIVE INJURY CENTER
MEDICAL COLLEGE OF WISCONSIN



Welcome...

Elaina Andreychak, MPH

Epidemiologist

Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Division of Public Health

Bureau of Environmental & Occupational Health



Alcohol-related Falls Among Older Adults: Results from Hospital Discharge and Vital Records

January 30, 2025

Elaina Andreychak, MPH

Epidemiologist

Environmental Public Health Tracking Program

Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health

Division of Public Health

Wisconsin Department of Health Services



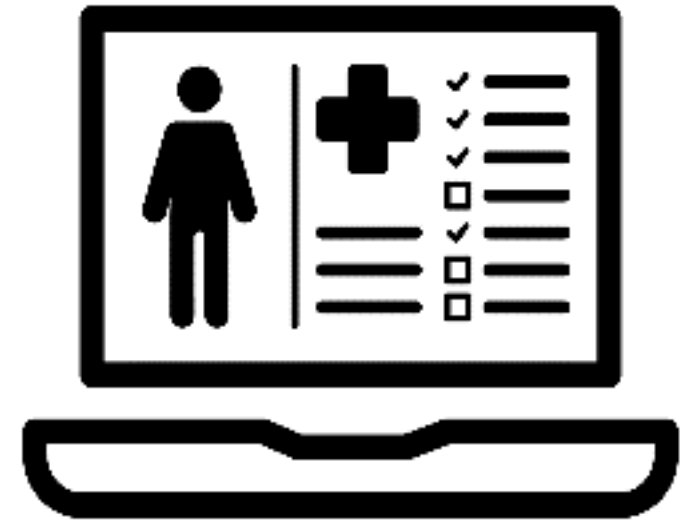
Objective

To understand the trends in alcohol-related falls among older adults in Wisconsin

Methods

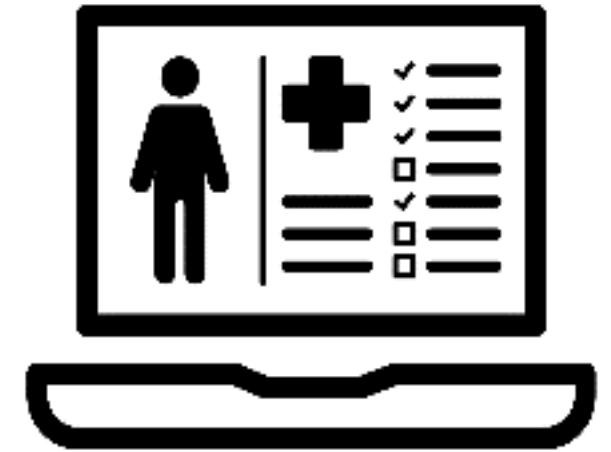
Data Sources

- **Wisconsin Hospital Discharge**
 - Hospitalizations and emergency department (ED) visits
- **Wisconsin Vital Records**
 - Deaths



Case Definitions

- **ICD-10 Codes**
 - Used to identify fall-related incidents in hospital discharge and vital records
- **Definition of “Fall”:**
 - ICD-10 code for accidental fall
- **Definition of “Alcohol-related Fall”:**
 - ICD-10 code for accidental fall AND alcohol use, abuse, dependence, or intoxication

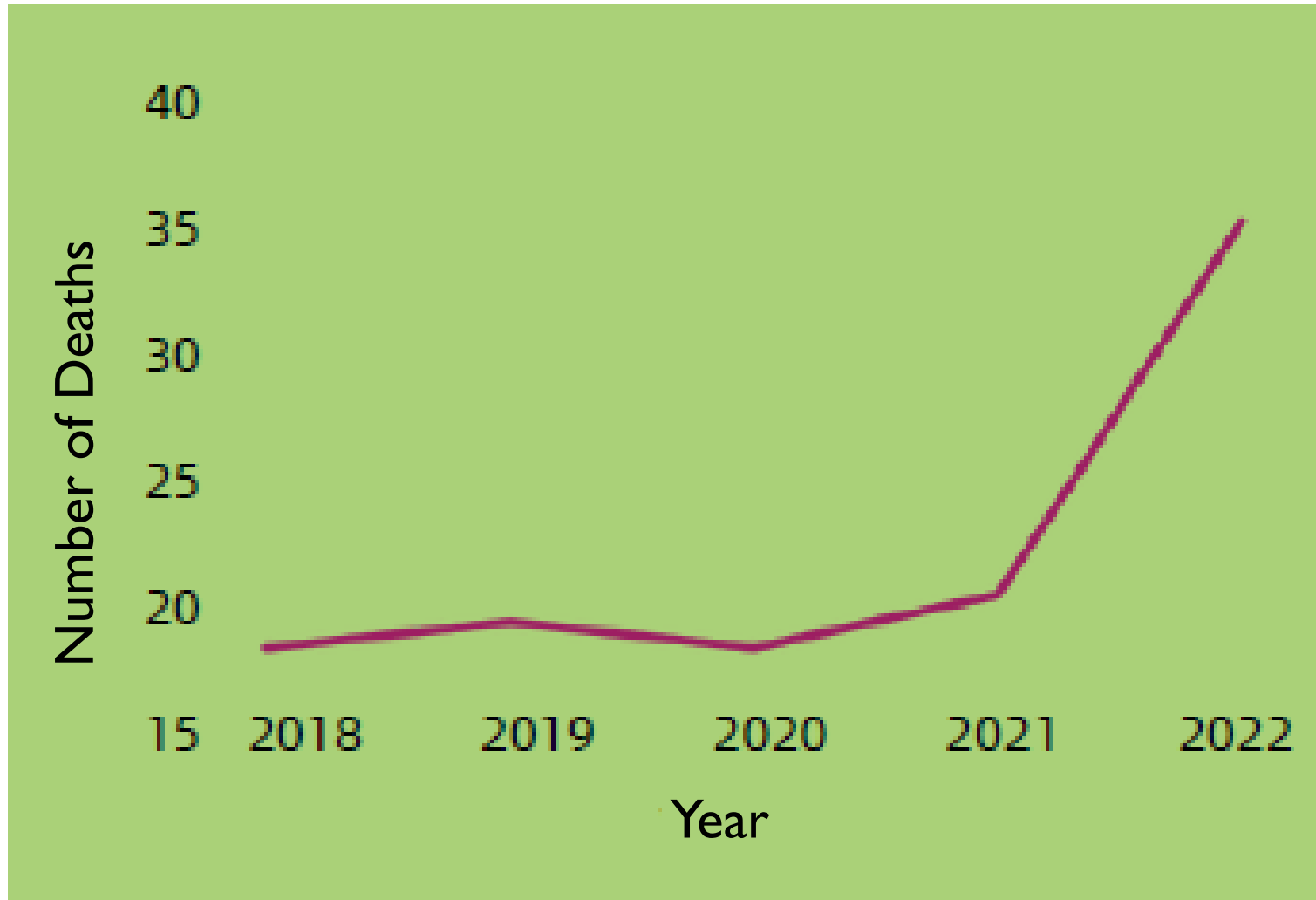


Definitions of Measures

- **Count**
 - Total number of cases that met case definition
- **Crude Rate**
 - Count divided by the total population x 100,000
- **Age-adjusted Rate**
 - Count divided by the total population x 100,000, adjusted for age
- **Confidence Intervals**
 - Range of values where the “true” rate lies, with 95% probability

Results

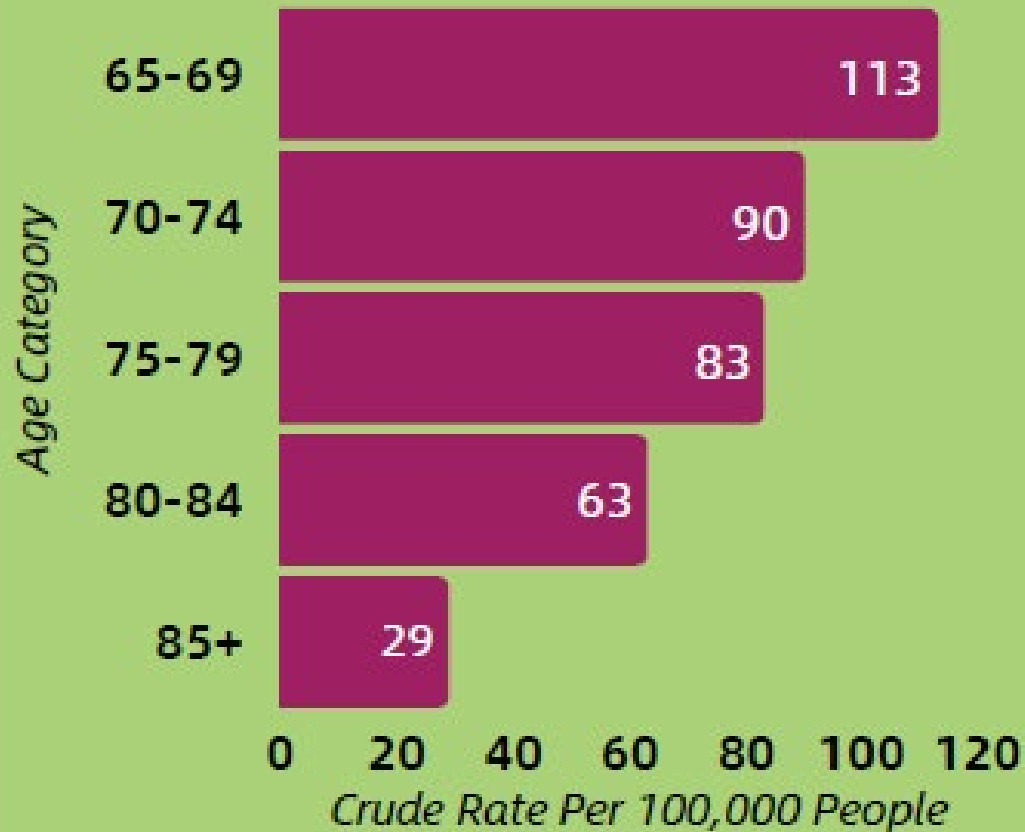
The number of alcohol-related fall deaths among older adults in Wisconsin is increasing.



Deaths increased from around 20 annually through 2021 to over 30 annually in 2022.

The rate of alcohol-related fall ED visits decreased with age.

Crude Rate Per 100,000 People of Older Adult Alcohol-Related Falls, Emergency Department Visits (WI, 2022)



In 2022, the crude rate of ED visits was highest among people aged 55–59, with 132 ED visits per 100,000 people.

White males made up the majority of alcohol-related fall ED visits, hospitalizations, and deaths.



Of older adult, alcohol-related falls, males account for: 80% deaths | 65% hospitalizations | 72% ED visits (WI, 2022)

The majority (97% deaths | 94% hospitalizations | 92% ED visits) of older adult, alcohol-related fall patients identify as white (WI, 2022)

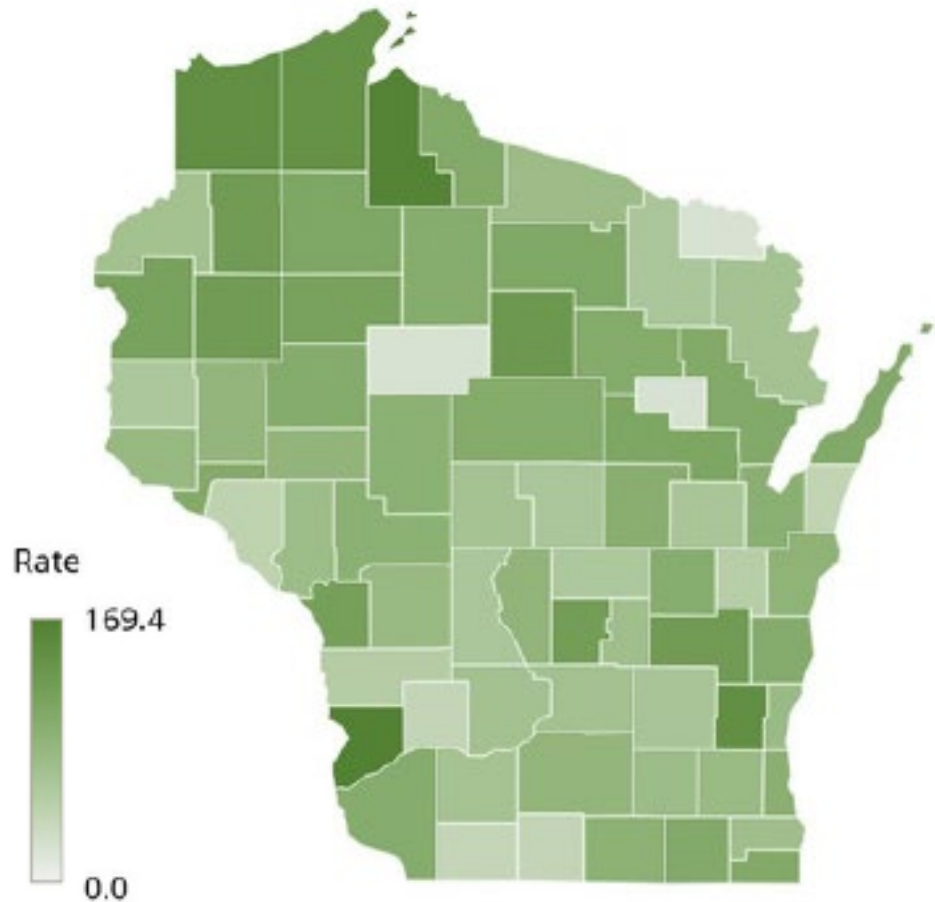


ED visits and hospitalizations for alcohol-related falls are getting more expensive.



- Hospitalization average cost: \$56,959 (up 23% since 2019)
- ED visit average cost: \$8,664 (up 30% from 2019)

Rates of medical outcomes of alcohol-related falls tend to be higher in northern Wisconsin.



County rates can vary considerably from year-to-year.

2022 Age-Adjusted Rate of Alcohol-Related ED Visits
Per 100,000 People

Conclusions

Key Points



- Rates and costs of alcohol-related falls are increasing in Wisconsin.
- The ED visit rate for alcohol-related falls peaks among folks aged 55–59, but older ages may have more severe complications from falls.

Limitations

- COVID-19 impacted the rates of hospitalizations and ED visits.
- In county data, counts of less than five make rate calculations unstable.
- Alcohol use may be underestimated in these data.



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Wisconsin Environmental Public
Health Tracking

Bureau of Environmental and
Occupational Health

Department of Health Services

Welcome...

Ben Weston, MD, MPH

*Associate Professor; Chief Health Policy Advisory, Milwaukee County;
Chief Medical Director, Milwaukee County Office of Emergency
Management*

Medical College of Wisconsin



knowledge changing life





**MILWAUKEE
COUNTY**



Alcohol-Related Fall Injuries in Older Adults

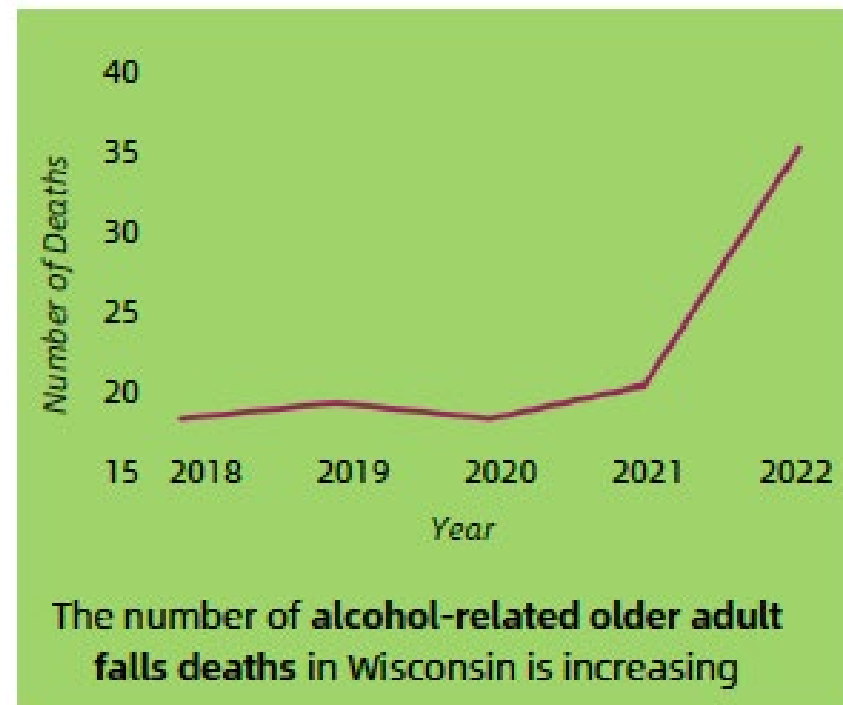
Dr. Ben Weston, Chief Health Policy
Advisor, MKE County

January 30, 2025



Prevalence of Alcohol-Related Falls

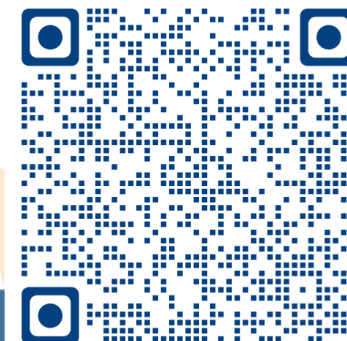
- Alcohol increases risk of falls in older adults by **18%**
- Alcohol-related falls are greatest in the 55-59, 60-64, and 65-69 category of age groups versus non-alcohol related falls are highest among 85+
- **Increasing** trend in the number of older adult alcohol-related fall ED visits, hospitalizations and deaths



Want to check your alcohol use?

This quick assessment can help you check.

CDC



Alcohol's impact on the brain



Alcohol can impact the parts of the brain which are responsible for motor and coordination



Impairment leads to postural instability



Older adults are more sensitive to sedative effects of alcohol

Risk Factors for Alcohol-Related Falls

Older age:
metabolism
changes,
medications

Pre-existing
health conditions

Increased
sensitivity

Gender: W>M

Amount of drinks

Types of Fall Injuries

- Head and face are the most injured body parts in alcohol-related falls
- Serious injuries are more frequently noted in falls related to alcohol (TBI, brain bleeds, internal injuries) → can contribute to increased mortality
- Fractures
- Subsequent immobility and reduced independence due to injury

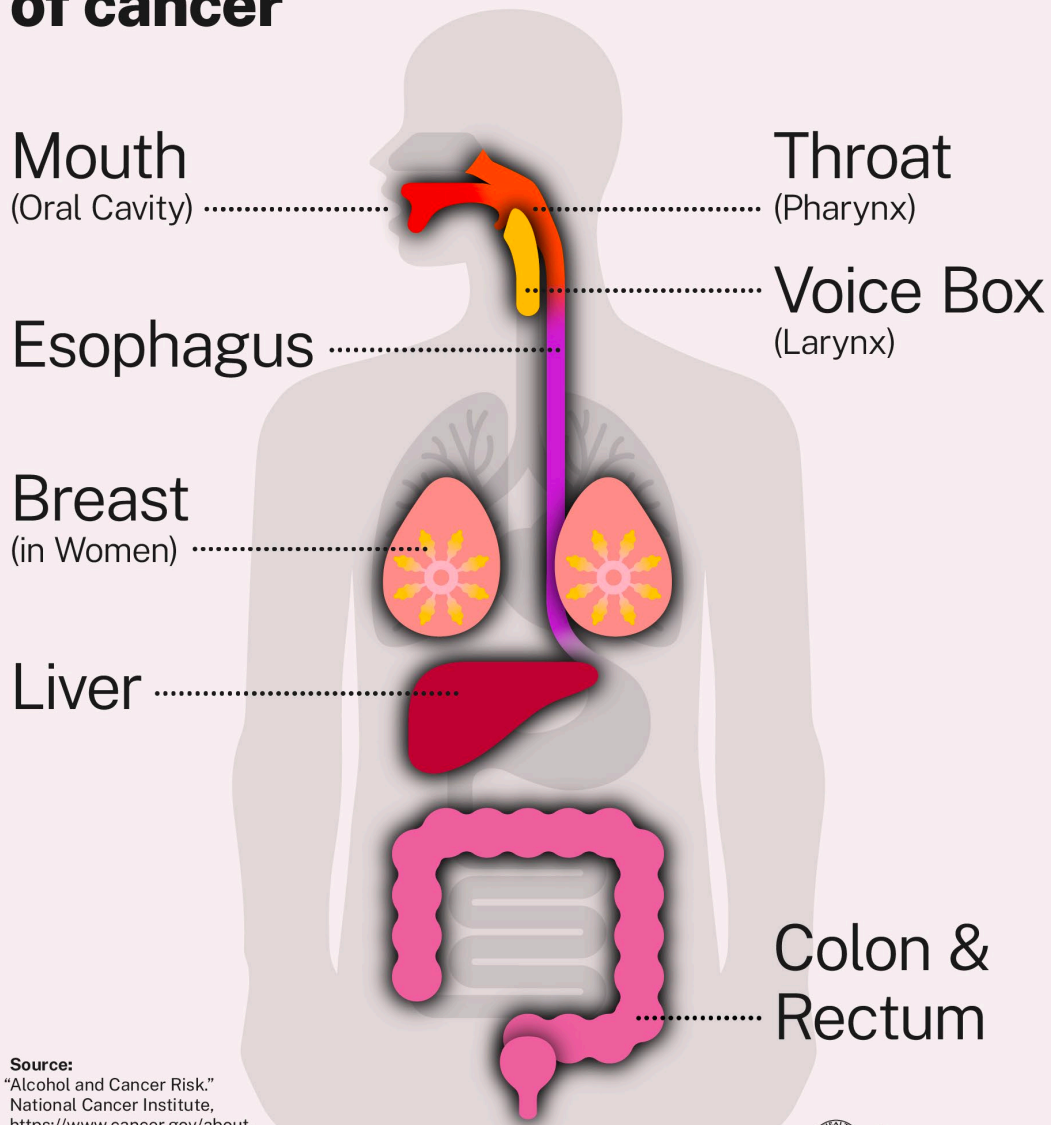


U.S. Surgeon General Issues New Advisory on Link Between Alcohol and Cancer Risk

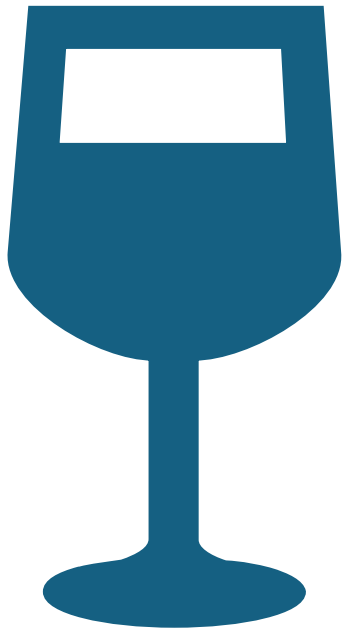
Alcohol Consumption is the Third Leading Preventable Cause of Cancer in the United States

- US Surgeon General, Dr. Vivek Murphy
- 100,000 cases and 20,000 cancer deaths are caused by alcohol
- Increased risk of cancer with increased drinking
- Call for a label on alcohol-containing drinks
- Prevention is key!!!

Consuming alcohol increases the risk of developing at least 7 types of cancer



Source:
"Alcohol and Cancer Risk."
National Cancer Institute,
<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/alcohol/alcohol-fact-sheet>



Conclusion:

- Alcohol can exacerbate falls, as well as have more severe outcomes
- Impacts of alcohol are variable due to age-related changes in metabolism
- Medication considerations
- Increased risk of cancer
- Reduce/stop drinking

Resources

FallsFreeWI.org: Falls Free Wisconsin provides falls prevention tips at the click of a button! Learn what can increase the risk for a fall and how to prevent them with screening, an interactive Home Safety Challenge, printable materials, videos and more. Promotional resources are available to spread the reach of this resource.



Falls Free CheckUp: Answer 13 simple questions to get your falls risk score and resources to prevent falls.



Wisconsin Addiction Recovery Helpline (call 211): Statewide resource for substance use treatment/services. Free, confidential and 24/7



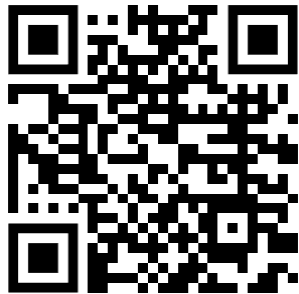
In MKE County, **HealthyMKE** for mental health and substance use resources



Thank You!

- Contact info:

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Welcome...

Suzanne Morley, CHES

Health Promotion Program Coordinator

Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging



Wisconsin Institute
for Healthy Aging



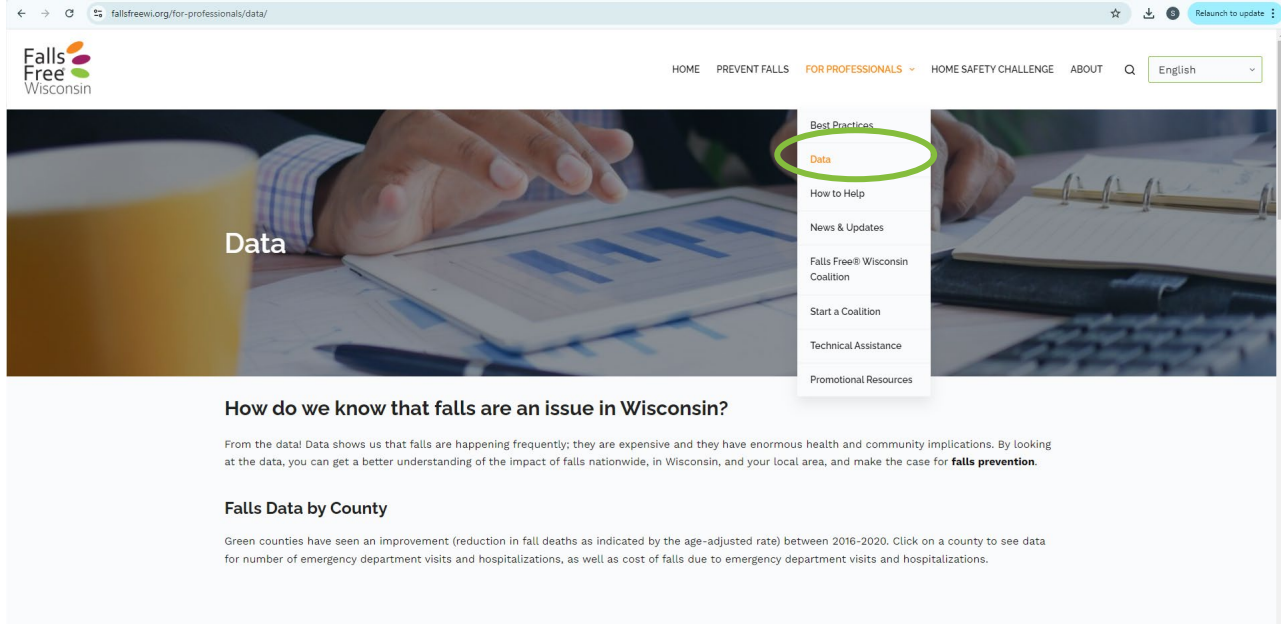
Questions?

Come off mute or use the chat!



Thanks for joining us!

Visit [FallsFreeWI.org](https://fallsfreewi.org)



Questions? Contact suzanne.morley@wihealthyaging.org

