

Did you know?

1 in 10
college freshmen
females
report consuming
more than
8 drinks
at least once within
a two-week period

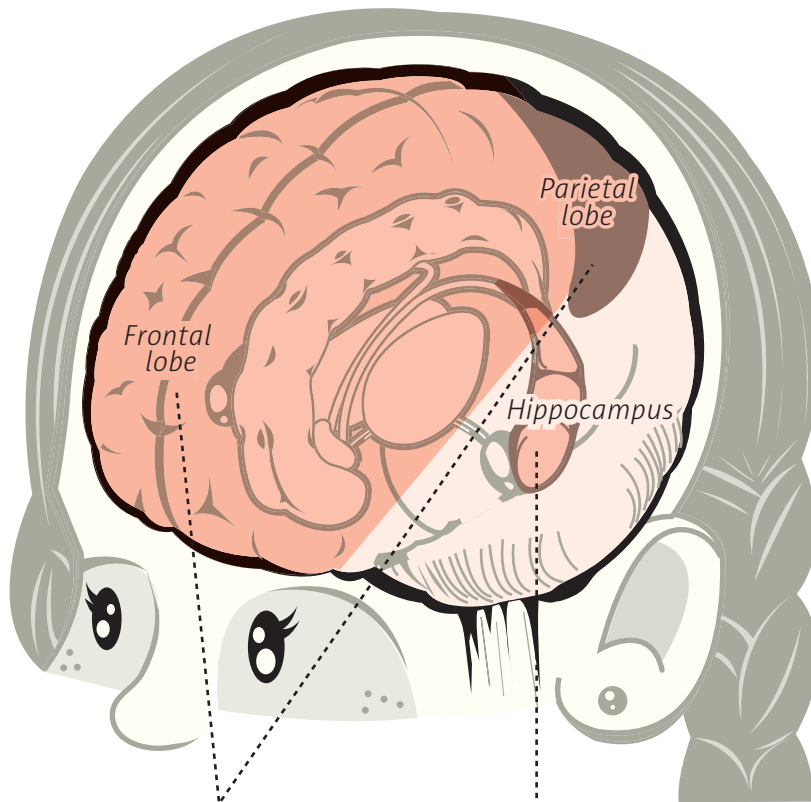
1 in 5
college freshmen
males
report consuming
more than
10 drinks
at least once within
a two-week period

51% of
under-
graduates
who say they drink report
blacking
out at some point

45% of adults
who developed
alcohol dependence*
began drinking before
age 16.

That compares to only 9 percent for those who started drinking at age 21 or older, according to a survey of 43,000 adults in 2001-2002. The study found the age link held even after controlling for family history of alcoholism.

*withdrawal symptoms, inability to cut down, etc.



Poor activity in regions of brain due to heavy adolescent drinking

Studies found adolescents with histories of heavy drinking had more trouble recalling verbal and nonverbal information. In one study, MRI scans of alcohol-dependent young women who drank heavily as teens showed “significantly diminished” responses in the frontal and parietal lobes. The frontal lobe is involved in problem solving, selective attention and personality; the parietal lobe affects visual, spatial and language abilities.

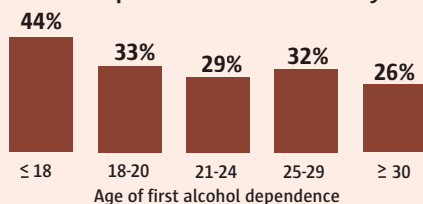
Alcohol-induced damage to hippocampus causes blackouts, memory loss

Blackouts, normally associated with alcoholics, were more common among social drinkers and college students. This is perhaps because excessive alcohol (usually consumed rapidly) can disrupt activity in the hippocampus — an area in the brain that helps form new memories.

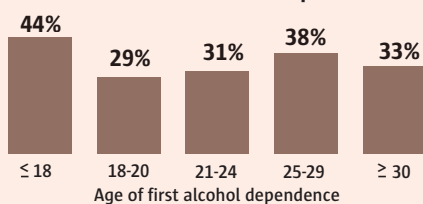
Youth and alcohol

The younger a person becomes alcohol dependent, the more likely he or she will stay addicted and experience symptoms, according to a study published in September.

Alcohol-dependent for more than 2 years



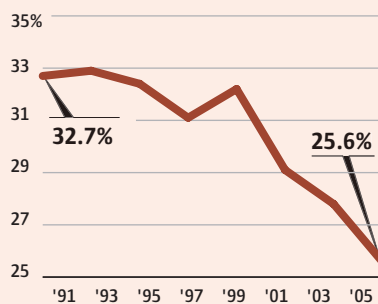
Percent who experience 6-7 symptoms of alcohol addiction while dependent



Adolescent drinking on decline

Very-young drinking is at its lowest since 1991, according to a survey of approximately 14,000 students.

Percent of students who took their first drink before age 13*



*First drink means more than just a sip.

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention