



Report findings: most of the costs were due to binge drinking

The cost of excessive alcohol consumption in the United States in 2006 reached \$223.5 billion or about \$1.90 per drink, according to a new study by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Almost three-quarters of these costs were due to binge drinking, consuming four or more alcoholic beverages per occasion for women or five or more drinks per occasion for men, the report said.

Excessive alcohol consumption, or heavy drinking, is defined as consuming an average of more than one alcoholic beverage per day for women, and an average of more than two alcoholic beverages per day for men, and any drinking by pregnant women or underage youth.

Researchers found the costs largely resulted from losses in workplace productivity (72 percent of the total cost), health care expenses for problems caused by excessive drinking (11 percent of the total cost), law enforcement and other criminal justice expenses related to excessive alcohol consumption (9 percent of the total cost), and motor vehicle crash costs from impaired driving (6 percent of the total cost). The study did not consider a number of other costs such as those due to pain and suffering by the excessive drinker or others who were affected by the drinking, and thus may be an underestimate. Researchers estimated that excessive drinking cost \$746 per person in the United States in 2006.

To read the full report, [click here](#).