

Alcohol Use Before and During Pregnancy

Key Findings

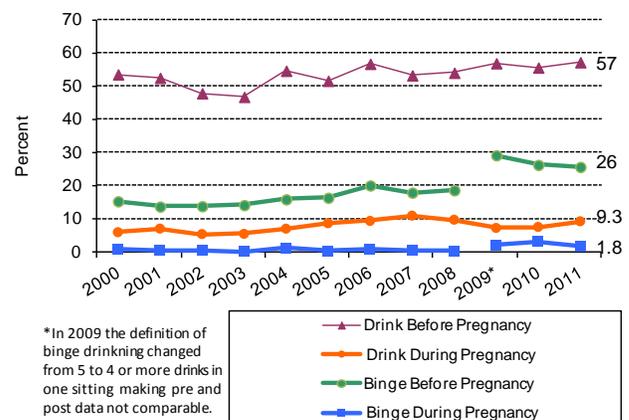
- Maternal prenatal alcohol exposure is one of the leading preventable causes of birth defects and developmental disabilities. Embryos and fetuses exposed to alcohol can develop a wide range of disorders from subtle physical and mental effects to severe mental retardation. There is no safe amount of alcohol, nor safe time, that a woman can drink while pregnant. Alcohol use in the three months prior to pregnancy is collected as women may not realize they are pregnant for several weeks.
- Drinking prior to pregnancy is very common. From 2009-2011, an estimated 57 percent of new mothers reported drinking alcohol during the three months before becoming pregnant. About 27 percent of women reported binge drinking during this period.
- Many women discontinue drinking while pregnant. Still, 8 percent of new mothers reported drinking alcohol during their last three months of pregnancy.¹
- From 2009-2011, 24 percent of women who intended to become pregnant engaged in binge drinking before pregnancy compared to 33 percent of women who did not intend to become pregnant. However, there was no difference in any drinking prior to pregnancy between women who intended or did not intend to become pregnant (data not shown in figures).¹

Definition: Alcohol use is defined as any drink of alcohol during the time in question. Binge drinking is defined as 4 or more alcoholic drinks at one sitting. These data are self-reported from the 2009-2011 Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) based on the average number of alcoholic drinks per week during the three months before the woman got pregnant and during her third trimester of pregnancy.

- Hispanic women reported lower drinking rates before pregnancy than women of other races/ethnicities.¹
- A greater proportion of Non-Hispanic White and American Indian/ Alaska Native Women reported binge drinking before pregnancy compared to women of other races/ethnicities.¹
- Regardless of Medicaid program, women receiving Medicaid had lower drinking rates before pregnancy and during the third trimester, but a greater proportion of binge drinkers (except undocumented) than women not receiving Medicaid.^{1, 2}
- The Healthy People 2020 objective is for at least 98.3% percent of pregnant women to abstain from alcohol and 100 percent to abstain from binge drinking during pregnancy. Washington has not met either of these objectives.³

Alcohol Use

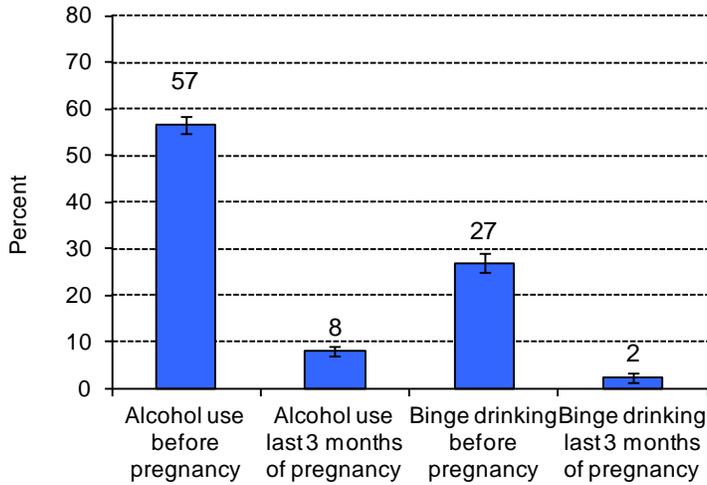
Alcohol Use Before and During Pregnancy
WA PRAMS, 2000-2011



Alcohol Use In Pregnancy By Maternal Age

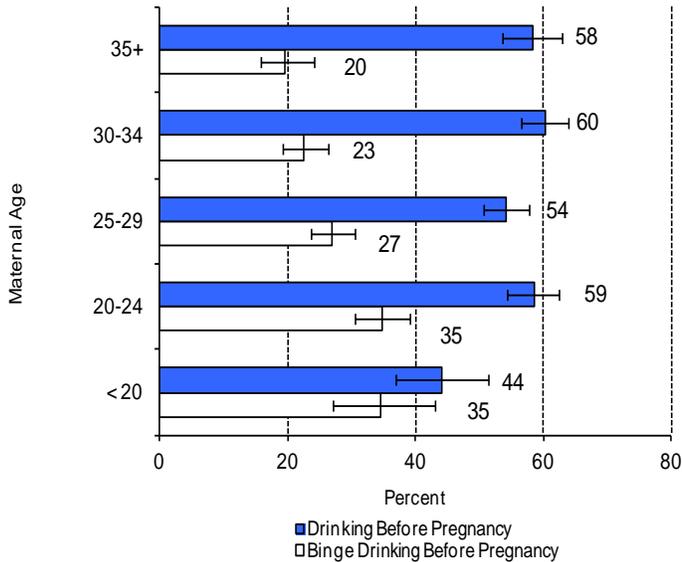
Overall ¹

**Alcohol Use Before and During Pregnancy
WA PRAMS, 2009-2011**



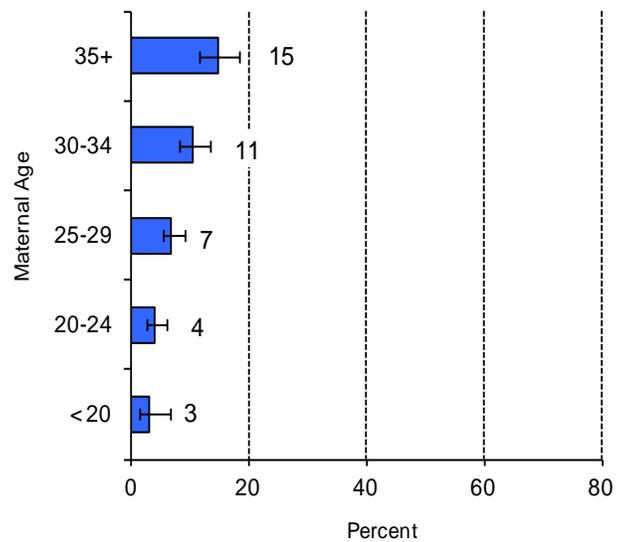
Drinking Before Pregnancy ¹

**Drinking Before Pregnancy and Binge Drinking Before
Pregnancy by Maternal Age
WA PRAMS 2009-2011**



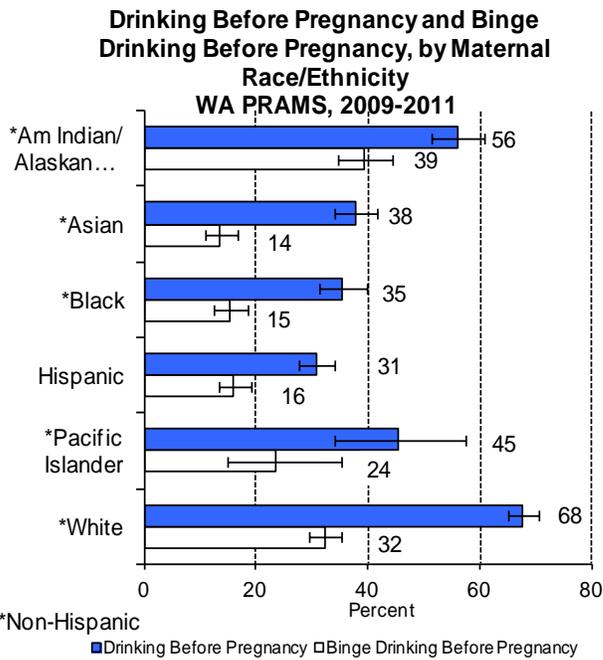
Third Trimester ¹

**Drinking In Third Trimester
by Maternal Age
WA PRAMS, 2009-2011**

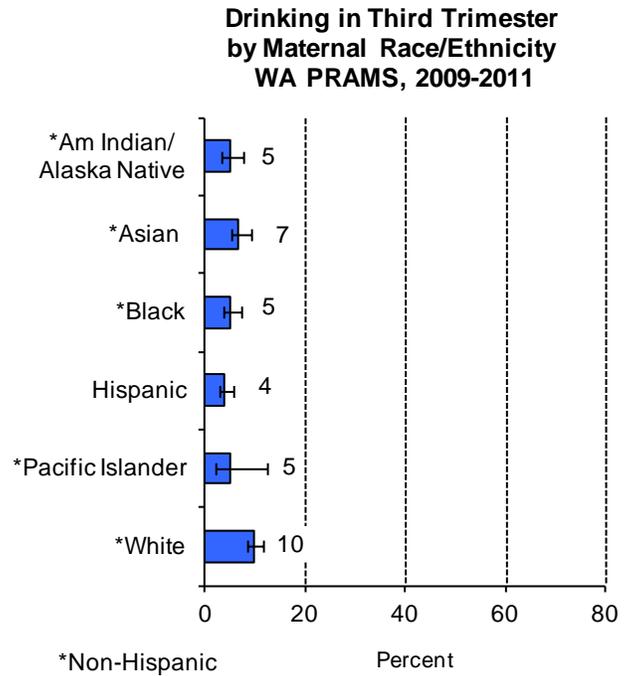


Alcohol Use in Pregnancy by Race and Ethnicity

Drinking Before Pregnancy ¹

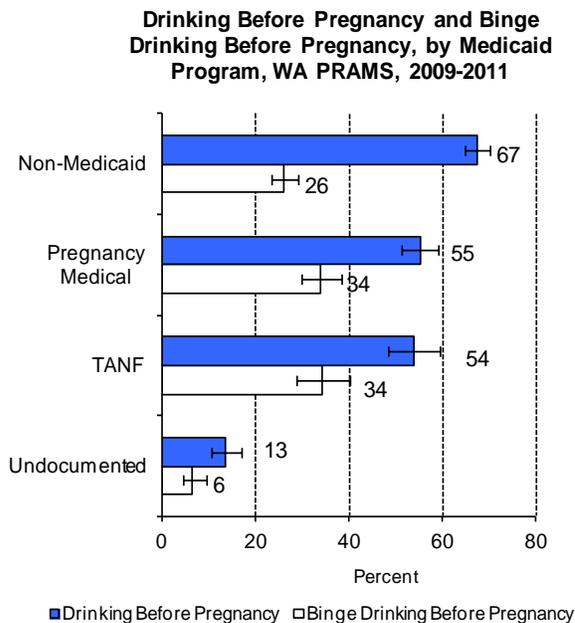


Third Trimester ¹

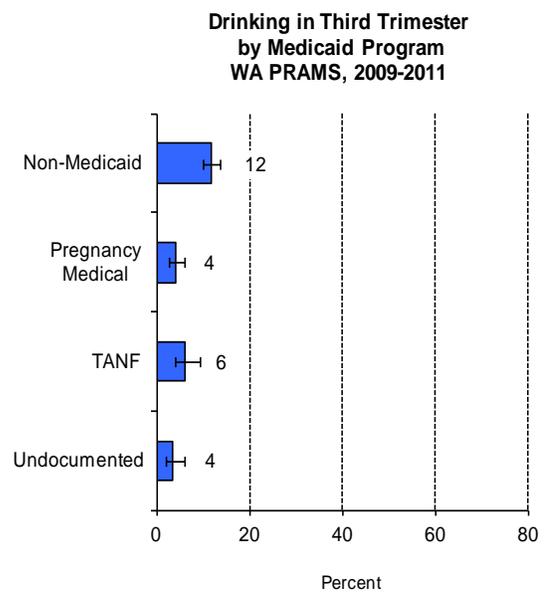


Alcohol Use in Pregnancy by Medicaid Status

Drinking Before Pregnancy ^{1,2,a}



Third Trimester ^{1,2,a}



Data Sources

1. *Washington Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) Phase 6m (2009-2011)*[Data file]. (2013). Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health..
2. *First Steps Database 2012* [Data file]. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Research and Data Analysis Division.
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2011) . Healthy People 2020. Accessed July 2011 at: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/default.aspx>

End Notes

- a. Medicaid women received maternity care paid for by Medicaid. Medicaid recipients were divided into three major subgroups (from highest to lowest socioeconomic status) based on program eligibility. **Pregnancy Medical** were women eligible for the pregnancy medical assistance “S” program. These women were U.S. citizens or legal US residents, and were eligible to receive Medicaid because they were pregnant and had incomes at or below 185% the federal poverty line; **TANF** were women enrolled in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. These women were very low income (generally < 50% the federal poverty level) and received cash assistance (TANF) in addition to Medicaid; and **Undocumented:** were women who were not legally admitted for permanent residence, lack temporary residence status, or were not lawfully present in the U.S. They were eligible to receive Medicaid because they were pregnant and had incomes at or below 185% the federal poverty level. Undocumented women were not eligible for TANF although their incomes were often lower than women on TANF. All three Medicaid groups had incomes below most non-Medicaid women. Note that Medicaid eligibility status for pregnant legal residents who were not US Citizens changed in Spring 2009. Prior to Spring 2009, legal residents who were not US Citizens were grouped with Undocumented women (and called Non-Citizens).

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