

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

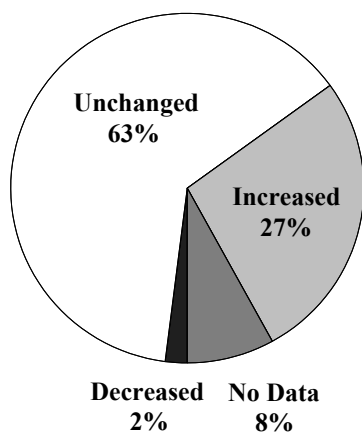
University of Maryland, College Park

Most States Report No Decrease in Smoking and Binge Drinking Rates Over the Past Decade

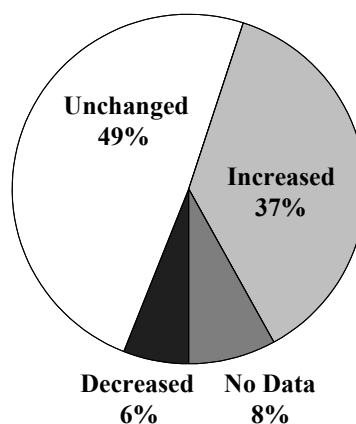
Rates of cigarette smoking and binge drinking have remained the same or increased in most states over the past decade, according to data from the national Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). Smoking rates remained unchanged in nearly two-thirds (63%) of the states and increased in 27% of states. Binge drinking fared just as poorly—nearly one-half (49%) of states had no improvement in binge drinking rates during the 1990s and more than one-third (37%) experienced increases. Only one state (Minnesota) had a decrease in cigarette use during the 1990s, and just three states (Arizona, Minnesota, Pennsylvania) had a decrease in binge drinking during this time period. According to the authors, these trends will require strong efforts to reduce the severity of these problems. For example, the authors suggest that there is a “continued need for major tobacco prevention and control efforts, such as increasing excise taxes and smoking cessation activities, because cigarette smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States” (p 2662).

Percentage of U.S. States with Decreased, Unchanged, or Increased Smoking and Binge Drinking Rates N=50 states and the District of Columbia

Smoking (1991 vs. 2000)



Binge Drinking (1991 vs. 1999)



NOTE: Smoking is defined as having smoked 100 or more cigarettes in their lifetime and smoke cigarettes currently. Binge drinking is defined as having five or more drinks on one or more occasion in the past month. Increase and decrease are defined as statistically significant changes in use.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Nelson D. E., Bland S., Powell-Griner E., Klein R., Wells H. E., Hogelin G., Marks J. S., “State Trends in Health Risk Factors and Receipt of Clinical Preventive Services Among US Adults During the 1990s,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 287(20):2659-2667, 2002. For more information, contact Dr. David E. Nelson at nelsond@mail.nih.gov.