

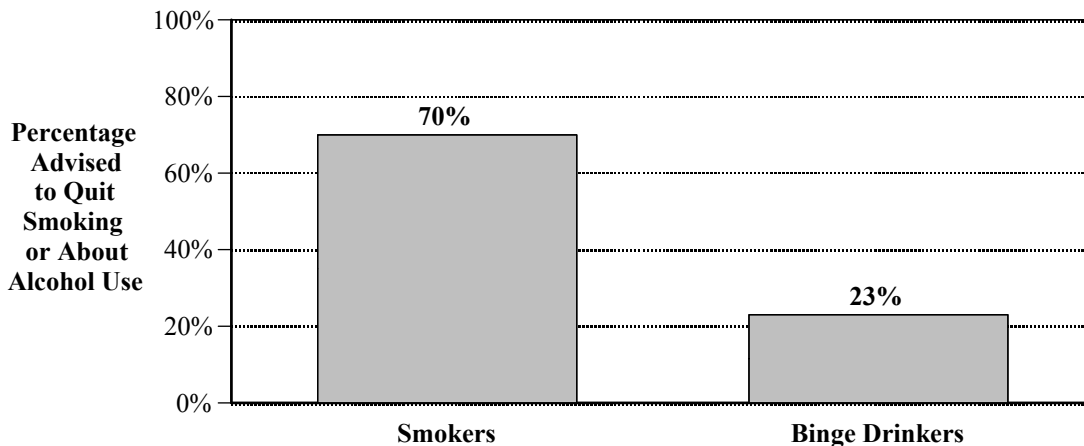
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Millions of U.S. Smokers and Binge Drinkers Are Not Advised By Physicians About Their Behavior

Smokers were more likely than binge drinkers to be advised by a health professional about their behavior, according to data from 10 states participating in the 1997 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. More than two-thirds (70%) of smokers who had a routine checkup in the past year reported that they had been advised by their doctor or other health professional to quit. One-fourth (23%) of binge drinkers had been talked to about their behavior. Based on this data the authors estimate that over 8 million smokers who had a routine checkup in the past year had not been advised to quit smoking and almost 11 million binge drinkers had not been spoken to about their alcohol use. The authors suggest that “efforts to increase smoking and alcohol intervention need to continue so that opportunities to decrease the mortality, morbidity and the costs related to smoking and alcohol abuse are not lost” (p. 73).

**Percentage of Smokers and Binge Drinkers Who Had a Routine Checkup
in the Past Year Who Reported That a Doctor or Other Health Professional
Advised Them About Their Behavior, 1997**
(smokers n=3818; binge drinkers n=1783)



NOTES: Smoking is defined as having smoked ≥ 100 cigarettes and currently smoking. Binge drinking is defined as consuming five or more drinks on at least one occasion in the past month.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Denny C.H., Serdula M.K., Holtzman D., Nelson, D.E.. “Physician Advice About Smoking and Drinking: Are U.S. Adults Being Informed?” *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 24(1):71-3, 2003. For more information contact Clark H. Denny at cf3@cdc.gov.

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