

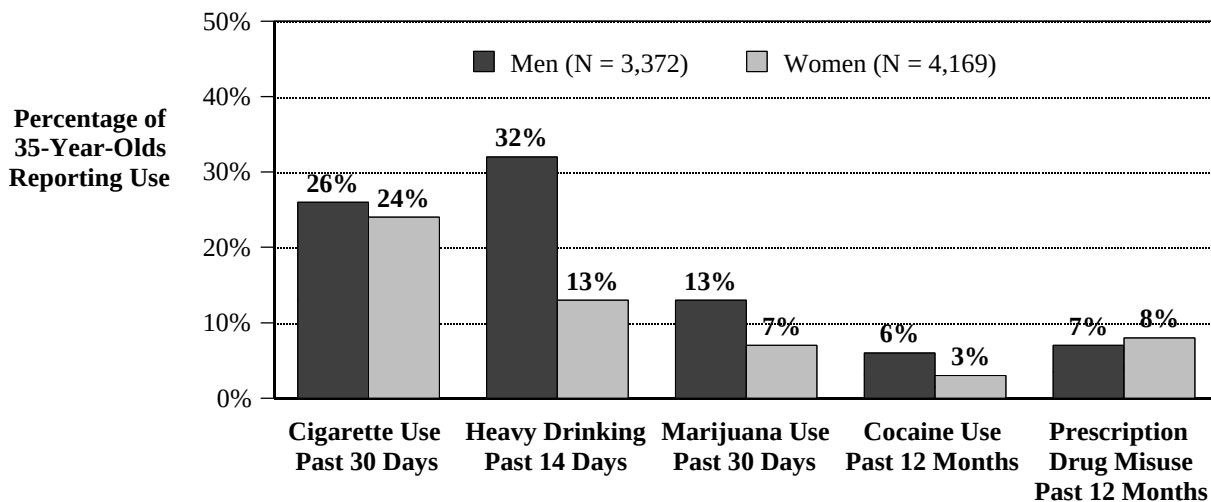
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Current Substance Use Among 35-Year-Old U.S. Residents Influenced by Previous Use and Current Demographic and Socioeconomic Status

Substance use is relatively prevalent at the beginning of midlife, according to data on substance use among 35-year-olds from the national Monitoring the Future study. Nearly one-third (32%) of 35-year-old men reported heavy drinking in the two weeks prior to the study and approximately one-fourth of men and women reported using cigarettes in the past 30 days (see figure below). Marijuana use in the past 30 days was reported by 13% of the men and 7% of the women. The researchers found that while "... for most people, the foundation for later substance use is set by the time they finish high school" (p. 101), substance use at the beginning of midlife was determined not only by previous experience with each substance but also by current demographic and socioeconomic status. Specifically, "factors related to increased likelihood of substance use included high school use, unemployment, and noncustodial parenthood. Lower use was associated with being female, a college graduate, a professional, married, or a custodial parent" (p. 96).

**Prevalence of Alcohol, Cigarette, and Illicit Drug Use
Among 35-Year-Old U.S. Residents, by Gender**
(Combined data for 1994 to 2000)



NOTES: Each year the Monitoring the Future project surveys a nationally representative sample of 17,000 high school seniors in approximately 135 schools, selected through a multistage sampling procedure. Approximately 2,400 participants are randomly selected from each group of seniors for biennial follow-up surveys until they are 30 years old and for an additional survey when they are 35 years old.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Merline, A., O'Malley, P., Schulenberg, J., Bachman, J. and Johnston, L., "Substance Use Among Adults 35 Years of Age: Prevalence, Adulthood Predictors, and Impact of Adolescent Substance Use," *American Journal of Public Health*, 94(1):96-102, 2004. For more information, contact Dr. Patrick O'Malley at pomalley@isr.umich.edu.

• 301-405-9770 (voice) • 301-403-8342 (fax) • CESAR@cesar.umd.edu • www.cesar.umd.edu •

CESAR FAX is supported by BYRN 2004-1206, awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice through the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention. CESAR FAX may be copied without permission. Please cite CESAR as the source.