

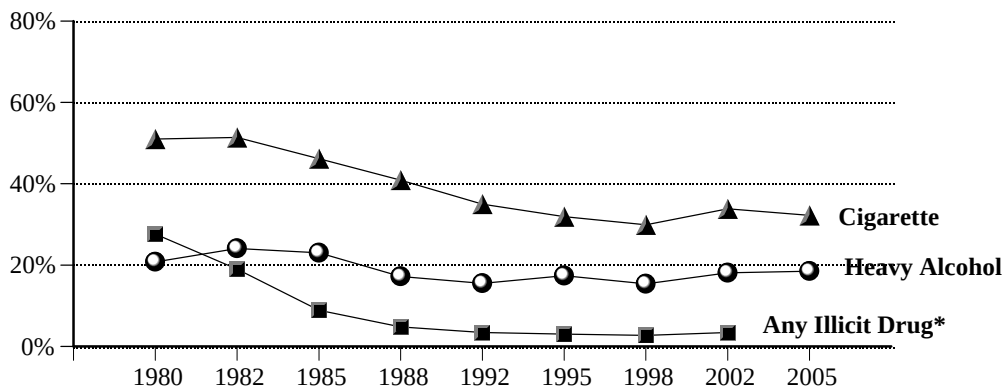
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Cigarette and Illicit Drug Use Among Military Personnel Decreases Over 25 Year Period; Heavy Alcohol Use Remains Relatively Unchanged

Cigarette smoking and illicit drug use among military personnel has declined significantly, according to a recent analysis of 25 years of data from the Department of Defense Health Related Behavior Survey. The percentage of military personnel reporting cigarette smoking in the past 30 days decreased from 51% when the survey began in 1980 to 32% in 2005, while those reporting illicit drug use decreased from 28% in 1980 to 3.4% in 2002.* Despite initial decreases in heavy alcohol use from 1982 to 1992, rates increased slightly in later years, returning to a level similar to that reported in 1980. One explanation for the recent increases in heavy alcohol use is that “changes in recruitment goals are tapping a population with higher rates of pre-existing heavy drinking and smoking, such as non-college graduates” (p. 1099).

**Percentage of Military Personnel Reporting Past Month
Cigarette, Heavy Alcohol, and Illicit Drug Use, 1980 to 2005**
(n ranged from 12,756 to 21,936)



*Because of wording changes, the 2005 data on illicit drug use are not comparable with data from prior surveys years.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Bray, R.M. and Hourani, L.L. “Substance Use Trends Among Active Duty Military Personnel: Findings from the United States Department of Defense Health Related Behavior Surveys, 1980–2005,” *Addiction* 102(7):1092-1101, 2007. For more information, contact Robert Bray at rmb@rti.org.

University of Maryland at College Park Seeks Health Services Faculty Member for Newly Developing Program in Health Services Administration

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