

A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

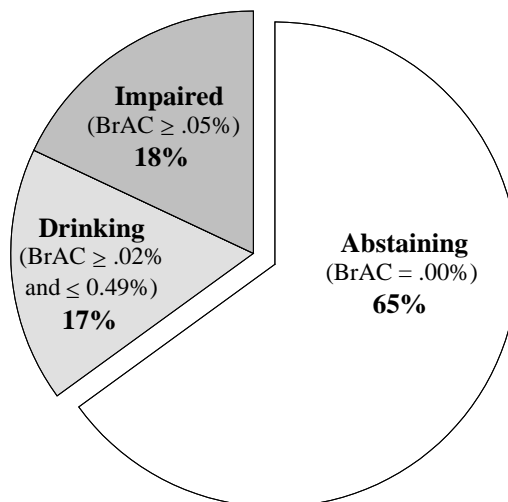
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***More Than One-Third of Designated Drivers in a
Southeastern U.S. College Town Had Been Drinking***

More than one-third of designated drivers leaving bars in a southeastern U.S. college town had been drinking, according to a recently released study of 1,071 bar patrons. Of the 165 self-identified designated drivers, 35% had a breath alcohol concentration (BrAC) at or above .02%, including 18% who had a BrAC that “significantly inhibited driving ability and psychomotor function” ($\geq .05\%$ or greater). According to the authors, “these findings identify the need for consensus across researcher, layperson, and communication campaigns that a [designated driver] must be someone who has abstained from drinking entirely. This is especially important considering that alcohol-related driver impairment, such as divided attention, is further exacerbated by the unsafe actions of drunken passengers (e.g., roughhousing with the driver)” (p. 512).

**Breath Alcohol Concentration (BrAC) of Designated Drivers in a Southeastern
U.S. College Community Restaurant and Bar District, 2011**

(n=165 Patrons Exiting Bars)



NOTES: Field surveys were conducted on Friday evenings before scheduled home Saturday football games, from approximately 10:00 pm to 2:30 am. Patrons exiting bars on public sidewalks were recruited to take part in a brief structured survey assessing alcohol-related behaviors and basic demographic information. Breath alcohol concentration was measured using a handheld alcohol breath testing instrument. The authors caution that these findings are limited by the fact that the sample lacked racial and ethnic diversity, had an overrepresentation of students and younger respondents, and was taken from a large southern university with a preeminent college football program.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Barry, A.E., Chaney, B.H., and Stellefson, M.L., “Breath Alcohol Concentrations of Designated Drivers,” *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 74(4):509-513, 2013. For more information, contact Dr. Adam Barry at aebarry@ufl.edu.