

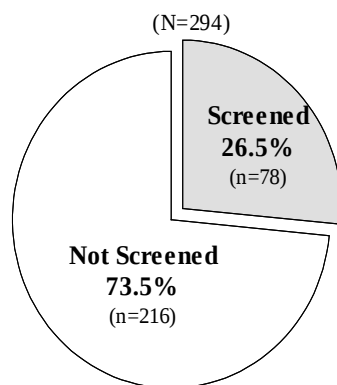
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

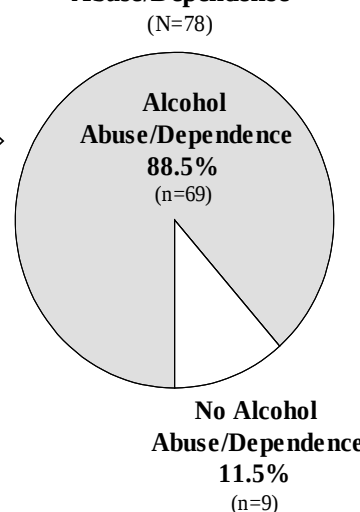
Routine Alcohol Screening in Trauma Centers May Identify Patients Who Would Benefit from Chemical Dependency Intervention

Only around one-fourth (26.5%) of patients admitted to the Mayo Clinic Emergency Trauma Unit after an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash (MVC) were subsequently screened for alcohol abuse/dependence by a psychiatrist or chemical dependency counselor. Of those screened, nearly all (88.5%) were diagnosed as having alcohol abuse and/or dependence. This high rate may be partially explained by characteristics in certain patients that led them to be screened (such as a history of alcohol abuse/dependence or high blood alcohol levels). The authors conclude that these "findings show frequently missed opportunities to provide chemical dependency screening evaluation and intervention to trauma victims who have experienced a crisis at precisely the time when successful intervention in their addictive disease process is maximized" (p. 234).

While Only 26.5% of the MVC Trauma Patients With a Detectable BAC Were Screened. . .



Nearly All of Those Screened Were Diagnosed as Having Alcohol Abuse/Dependence



NOTE: Nationally, one-third of trauma centers routinely conduct blood alcohol tests and less than 6% utilize interview screening tests.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from data from Pamela M. Maxson, Keith H. Berge, Daniel K. Hall-Flavin, Scott P. Zietlow, Darrell R. Schroeder, & Carla M. Lange, "Detectable Blood Alcohol Alcohol After a Motor Vehicle Crash and Screening for Alcohol Abuse/Dependence," *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, 75(231-234), March 2000.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

An Alcohol Impairment Chart is available online at <http://www.health.org/pubs/qdocs/alcohol/bac-chrt.htm>. The chart takes into account body weight, number of drinks, and the approximate blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level. **Please note that the chart is meant to be a guide, not a guarantee.**

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