

# **2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey**

**Detailed findings**

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# **2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey**

**Detailed findings**

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# Preface

This report contains information from the 2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey. It supplements data published earlier this year in the report titled *2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: First Results*. The purpose of this report is to extend the analysis with detailed data on drug use, behaviour, perceptions of drug use, drug-related incidents and support for drug-related policy and legislation.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) undertook the survey on behalf of the then Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. Custody of the survey data set rests with the AIHW and is protected by the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987*. Access to a public-use data set is available through the Social Science Data Archives at the Australian National University, with access to the complete data set possible following consideration of research proposals by the AIHW Ethics Committee.



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# Summary

## **In 2001, fewer than one in five Australians aged 14 years and over smoked tobacco daily...**

- A further 1.6% smoked weekly and 2.0% smoked less often than weekly.
- The group with the highest proportion of smokers was males aged 20–29 years.
- The average age at which Australians began smoking was about 15 years. The average number of cigarettes smoked per week by male smokers was 111.8 and 106.5 for female smokers.
- More than 10% of those aged 14–17 years smoked tobacco daily; females in this age group were more likely than males to smoke daily. Three in five male smokers and three-quarters of female smokers aged 14–17 years reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances smoked.
- For 82.6% of recent smokers aged 14–17 years, the means of obtaining tobacco was at a shop/retail outlet.
- Tobacco smoking was identified by over 40% of Australians as the main drug associated with mortality in Australia. It was also the second most likely form of drug use to be nominated as a serious concern for the community.
- For 53.2% of smokers aged 14–17 years, the usual source for obtaining tobacco was at a shop/retail outlet.
- The majority of Australians supported ‘stricter enforcement of laws against supplying minors’ as a measure to reduce the harm associated with tobacco.
- In the past 12 months a third of smokers reduced the amount of tobacco smoked in a day. For both male and female smokers, cost and effect on health or fitness were the main motivators for change in smoking behaviour.

## **One in six Australians abstained from alcohol in the past 12 months...**

- However, approximately one in 10 Australians reported drinking at levels considered risky or high risk for both short- and long-term harm. In the past 12 months, a greater proportion of males than females consumed alcohol at levels risky for short-term health. In comparison, consumption at levels of risk for harm in the long term was similar between males and females.
- The average age at which males first consumed a full glass of alcohol was about 16 years whereas for females it was about 18 years.
- In the past 12 months two-thirds of Australians aged 14–17 years had consumed at least a full glass in the last 12 months – almost one in five drank alcohol on a weekly basis. For this age group, about three-quarters of both male and female recent drinkers reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances consumed alcohol.
- A third of those who drank at risky or high-risk levels in the past 12 months had reduced the amount drunk per session; one in 10 consumed more low-alcohol drinks. The main motivating factors for reduction were health, lifestyle and social reasons.

- The most popular form of alcohol consumed by males was regular strength beer; for females aged 14–29 years bottled spirits and liqueurs were the typical form of alcohol consumed and for females aged 30 years and over, bottled wine was the most popular form of alcohol.
- Alcohol consumption by an adult was the drug use that received the highest level of acceptance by Australians: accepted by more than four in five males and seven in 10 females. However, one in five Australians considered excessive drinking of alcohol to be the form of drug use of most concern for the general community.
- Three in 10 Australians had been verbally abused, physically abused or put in fear by someone affected by alcohol. Persons who had consumed alcohol in the past 12 months were more likely than those who had not consumed alcohol in the past 12 months to have been victims of alcohol-related incidents.

### **Illicit drugs were used by less than one in five Australians in the last 12 months...**

- Generally, greater proportions of males than females, and 20–29 years olds, were recent illicit drug users. The most influential factor in trying an illicit drug for the first time was ‘curiosity’.
- The average age at which Australians first used illicit substances ranged from 17.6 years for inhalants to 22.8 years for tranquillisers.
- Marijuana/cannabis was the most used illicit drug – over 2 million Australians aged 14 years and over used this drug in the past 12 months. Less than 3.5% of Australians aged 14 years and over had used hallucinogens, heroin, methadone, other opiates, amphetamines, ecstasy/designer drugs or cocaine.
- One-quarter of Australians reported having the offer or opportunity to use marijuana/cannabis; more than half of those who had the opportunity used in the past 12 months.
- Less than one in 10 Australians supported the legalisation of cocaine, heroin and amphetamines/speed; three in 10 approved of the legalisation of marijuana/cannabis for personal use. Recent users of marijuana/cannabis were almost four times more likely than those who were not recent users to support legalisation.
- In the past 12 months, less than one in seven Australians had been verbally or physically abused, or put in fear, by a person affected by illicit drugs. Recent users of illicit drugs were more likely than those who had not used in the past 12 months to have been victims of drug-related incidents.

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# Abbreviations

AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CATI	Computer assisted telephone interview
CURF	Confidentialised unit record file
DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing
MCDS	Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy
NCADA	National Campaign Against Drug Abuse
NDS	National Drug Strategy
NDSHS	National Drug Strategy Household Survey
NHMRC	National Health & Medical Research Council
NHS	National Health Survey
RSE	Relative standard error
SE	Standard error

## Symbols

-	nil, or rounded to zero
..	not applicable
*	relative standard error greater than 50%
n.a.	not available
m	million





# 1 Introduction

## The National Drug Strategy

The National Drug Strategy (NDS), formerly the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NCADA), was created in 1985 with strong bi-partisan political support to address the impact licit and illicit drugs have on Australian society. The aims of the NDS are to prevent and reduce the uptake of harmful drug use and minimise the harmful effects of licit and illicit drugs in Australia.

The NDS is managed under the direction of the Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy (MCDS), which comprises ministers for health and law enforcement from the Commonwealth Government and State and Territory Governments. The ministers are responsible for collectively determining national policies and programs designed to reduce the harm caused by drugs to individuals, families and communities in Australia (MCDS 1998).

## About the 2001 survey

The 2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey was built on the design of the previous survey (1998), making it the most comprehensive survey concerning licit and illicit drug use ever undertaken in Australia. Almost 27,000 people aged 14 years and over provided information on their drug use patterns, attitudes and behaviours. The sample was based on households, therefore homeless and institutionalised persons were not included in the survey (consistent with the approach in previous years).

The survey was the seventh conducted under the auspices of the NDS. Previous surveys were conducted in 1985, 1988, 1991, 1993, 1995 and 1998. The data collected from these surveys have contributed to the development of policies for Australia's response to drug-related issues.

Further information on the 2001 survey can be found in *2001 National Drug Strategy Household Survey: First Results* (AIHW 2002).

## **Comparison with previous surveys**

The methodology of the 2001 survey differed slightly from that of previous surveys.

The 2001 survey introduced the computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) method to supplement the drop and collect method and the face-to-face method. The CATI results were scrutinised by the Technical Advisory Committee and it was agreed that these results were sufficiently comparable with the drop and collect and face-to-face methods to support inclusion in the survey data set.

The 2001 sample (26,744) was two-and-a-half times larger than the 1998 sample (10,030) and around seven times larger than the 1995 and 1993 samples (3,850 and 3,500 respectively). Due to the greater sample size, the 2001 estimates should be the most reliable.

There was a minor change in the wording of questions used to determine 'ever use' of illicit drugs. In 1993, 1995 and 1998, the questions were in the form 'ever tried' whereas in 2001 the questions were in the form 'ever used'. In addition, the 1998 and 2001 surveys used comprehensive logic and edit checks to increase the reliability of estimates of ever use of drugs. This may have produced marginally higher prevalence estimates when compared with the 1995 and 1993 estimates.

This report applies the *National Health Data Dictionary* (AIHW 2001) definition of tobacco smoking status, notably relating to ex-smokers and never smokers where a threshold of 100 cigarettes is used. Data are presented for 2001; however, the definition is not applicable to previous survey data.

## **Comparison with the 2001 National Health Survey**

Summary results from the 2001 NHS conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics were released in October 2002 (ABS 2002). Both the NDSHS and the NHS collected data on tobacco and alcohol consumption in Australia in 2001. Some results differed slightly between the two surveys, with many possible methodological reasons for these differences. Comparable results and key methods for the two surveys are summarised in Appendix 4.

# 2 Perceptions and acceptability of drug use

## Introduction

The 2001 NDSHS explored the opinions and perceptions of Australians aged 14 years and over on a variety of drug-related issues, including personal approval of drug use, the impact of drugs on the general community and on mortality, and their perceptions of health risk from alcohol and tobacco consumption.

## Drugs perceived to be associated with a ‘drug problem’

In the 2001 survey, respondents were asked to name the first two drugs they thought of when talking of a ‘drug problem’. When thinking of the first drug associated with a ‘drug problem’ heroin was the drug nominated most (Table 2.1) – nominated by one in two Australians aged 14 years and over (50.6% of males and 49.6% of females).

It was also found that when thinking of the first drug associated with a ‘drug problem’:

- less than 8% of persons aged 14 years and over nominated alcohol as the drug associated with a ‘drug problem’ and less than 3% nominated tobacco; and
- inhalants, hallucinogens and prescribed drugs were the illicit drugs least likely to be nominated.

**Table 2.1: Drugs most likely to be associated with a 'drug problem', persons aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group						All ages
	14-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
(per cent)							
<b>Males</b>							
Tobacco	4.5	2.1	1.9	2.4	2.5	4.0	2.8
Alcohol	9.3	7.0	7.0	7.3	8.1	9.3	7.9
Tea/coffee/caffeine	–	0.2 *	–	0.1 *	0.2 *	0.3	0.1
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	40.0	24.2	19.4	21.2	22.7	21.5	23.8
Prescribed drugs <sup>(a)</sup>	0.7	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.9
Inhalants	0.6	0.3 *	0.2 *	0.2 *	0.2 *	0.6	0.3
Heroin	32.9	48.7	55.8	54.7	56.1	49.3	50.6
Amphetamines/speed	4.0	6.7	4.8	3.8	2.7	3.2	4.3
Cocaine	4.5	5.3	6.4	5.6	4.2	6.4	5.5
Hallucinogens	0.7	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.5
Ecstasy/designer drugs	2.5	3.3	2.5	2.4	1.2	1.2	2.2
Other	–	0.5	0.2 *	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.3
None/can't think of any	0.4	0.3 *	0.7	0.5	0.8	1.5	0.7
<b>Females</b>							
Tobacco	3.5	1.3	1.7	2.8	2.7	3.7	2.6
Alcohol	6.8	5.9	6.3	7.3	9.4	10.4	7.7
Tea/coffee/caffeine	0.1 *	0.1 *	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.3
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	39.7	23.6	19.6	22.0	21.8	21.3	23.5
Prescribed drugs <sup>(a)</sup>	0.5	0.7	0.7	1.8	1.5	2.3	1.3
Inhalants	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.1 *	0.4	0.6	0.4
Heroin	36.1	48.4	54.5	52.4	51.5	49.3	49.6
Amphetamines/speed	5.1	8.7	6.2	4.1	3.5	2.5	5.0
Cocaine	3.4	7.0	6.3	5.3	6.1	5.2	5.7
Hallucinogens	0.7	0.3	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.6
Ecstasy/designer drugs	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.4	1.8	1.8	2.5
Other	0.2 *	0.1 *	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2
None/can't think of any	0.2 *	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.2 *	1.5	0.6

(a) Includes prescription drugs such as pain-killers/analgesics, tranquillisers/sleeping pills, steroids and barbiturates, used for non-medical purposes.

## Form of drug use perceived to be of most serious concern for the general community

Respondents were asked to nominate one form of drug use they considered to be of most serious concern for the general community. In 2001, Australians aged 14 years and over considered heroin use to be of most serious concern (Table 2.2). Other results include:

- One in three males (36.6%) and females (33.0%) nominated heroin use as the form of drug use of most serious concern to the general community.
- Excessive drinking of alcohol was the second most likely form of drug use to be nominated. One-fifth of males (20.0%) and almost one-quarter (24.6%) of females nominated excessive drinking.
- Males (20.3%) were more likely than females (17.6%) to nominate tobacco smoking. Among teenagers (14–19 years), tobacco smoking was the second most nominated drug, behind heroin.

**Table 2.2: Form of drug use thought to be of most serious concern for the general community, persons aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Form of drug use	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
(per cent)							
<b>Males</b>							
Tobacco smoking	22.5	18.2	19.1	20.8	20.9	21.4	20.3
Excessive drinking of alcohol	15.1	19.1	20.8	22.2	21.3	19.5	20.0
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis use	11.9	5.5	3.7	3.7	4.2	4.3	5.1
Prescribed drugs	1.0	0.6	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.1	1.1
Sniffing	2.6	2.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	1.1	1.5
Heroin use	33.2	40.1	36.1	35.4	37.2	36.4	36.6
Amphetamine/speed use	1.9	3.1	2.6	2.2	1.6	1.6	2.2
Cocaine use	5.3	5.7	7.5	5.8	7.7	10.0	7.1
Hallucinogen use	0.4 *	0.4	0.4	0.1 *	0.2 *	0.4	0.3
Ecstasy/designer drug use	5.9	4.9	7.1	6.8	4.3	4.0	5.5
None of these	0.3 *	0.3 *	0.2 *	0.3	0.1 *	0.4	0.3
<b>Females</b>							
Tobacco smoking	24.0	16.2	15.1	16.8	17.9	18.4	17.6
Excessive drinking of alcohol	16.7	20.6	24.8	27.5	27.3	27.0	24.6
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis use	14.0	6.0	4.8	4.9	4.3	3.4	5.6
Prescribed drugs	0.5	1.1	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.4
Sniffing	1.7	2.0	1.4	1.7	1.3	1.9	1.7
Heroin use	28.7	34.7	33.4	32.3	33.8	33.6	33.0
Amphetamine/speed use	2.3	3.8	2.9	1.7	1.9	1.5	2.3
Cocaine use	3.6	6.5	6.8	5.9	5.6	6.8	6.1
Hallucinogen use	0.7	0.3	0.4	–	0.2 *	0.5	0.3
Ecstasy/designer drug use	7.2	8.5	8.7	7.5	5.8	4.9	7.1
None of these	0.6	0.3	0.1 *	0.2	0.1 *	0.4	0.3

There were differences in the drug nominated depending on the respondent's own drug use patterns:

- One-third (32.3%) of recent users of heroin considered heroin to be the drug of most serious concern to the general community.
- Around one in seven (13.9%) recent users of tobacco nominated tobacco as the drug of most serious concern.
- Across socioeconomic quintiles there were differences in the perception of which drug is of most serious concern for the general community. The proportion of respondents who thought of either tobacco smoking or excessive drinking of alcohol as the form of drug use of most serious concern for the general community increased with socioeconomic advantage.

## **Drugs perceived to be associated with mortality**

Drug use, both licit (tobacco and alcohol) and illicit, is a large contributor to both mortality and morbidity in Australia. It is estimated that in 1998 almost 15% of all deaths (14,415 males and 3,256 females) were related to drug use (AIHW: Ridolfo & Stevenson 2001). Tobacco and alcohol were responsible for over 93% of the drug-related mortality and morbidity.

Respondents were asked which single drug they thought directly or indirectly caused the most deaths in Australia. It was found that:

- across all age groups, the drug perceived to directly or indirectly cause the most deaths was tobacco (Table 2.3). Over 40% of persons aged 14 years and over thought of tobacco as the drug that contributes greatest to mortality in Australia;
- tobacco and alcohol were considered to contribute to more than half of all drug-related deaths. Males were more likely than females to select both tobacco and alcohol as the drugs causing the most deaths in Australia; and
- those aged 14–19 years were the age group most likely to select marijuana/ cannabis and amphetamines as the drugs causing the most deaths in Australia.

**Table 2.3: Drugs thought to either directly or indirectly cause the most deaths in Australia, persons aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
(per cent)							
<b>Males</b>							
Tobacco	36.9	43.2	46.2	48.8	47.7	41.1	44.5
Alcohol	24.0	24.5	23.6	22.1	21.8	19.2	22.4
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	3.1	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.2	2.3	1.5
Prescribed drugs	0.3 *	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2
Opiates (e.g. heroin)	24.0	19.6	18.2	19.3	20.8	25.5	21.0
Amphetamines/speed	3.9	3.6	2.5	1.4	1.5	1.6	2.3
Cocaine	6.8	6.2	6.5	5.1	5.3	8.3	6.4
Hallucinogens	0.9	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.7	0.7
<b>Females</b>							
Tobacco	33.4	37.4	37.6	42.7	41.6	34.3	37.9
Alcohol	23.7	21.5	22.5	22.6	22.9	20.8	22.2
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	4.4	0.9	0.8	0.8	1.2	2.2	1.5
Prescribed drugs	1.5	2.4	1.8	1.7	2.9	2.0	2.0
Opiates (e.g. heroin)	22.2	23.7	24.1	23.0	22.1	28.7	24.3
Amphetamines/speed	5.9	4.6	3.4	1.7	2.2	2.4	3.2
Cocaine	6.9	8.9	8.6	6.8	6.5	8.7	7.9
Hallucinogens	2.0	0.6	1.1	0.8	0.6	1.0	1.0
<b>Persons</b>							
Tobacco	35.1	40.3	41.7	45.8	44.7	37.3	41.1
Alcohol	23.9	23.0	23.0	22.3	22.4	20.1	22.3
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	3.8	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.2	2.3	1.5
Prescribed drugs	0.9	1.8	1.6	1.5	2.1	1.6	1.6
Opiates (e.g. heroin)	23.2	21.6	21.3	21.2	21.4	27.3	22.7
Amphetamines/speed	4.9	4.1	3.0	1.6	1.9	2.0	2.8
Cocaine	6.9	7.6	7.6	5.9	5.9	8.5	7.1
Hallucinogens	1.4	0.6	0.9	0.8	0.5	0.9	0.8

## Approval of drug use

Respondents were asked if they personally approve or disapprove of the regular use by an adult of a selected list of drugs. Besides tobacco, alcohol and marijuana/ cannabis, all other drugs received less than 8.0% support. Other results include:

- Alcohol was the drug most likely to be approved of by Australians aged 14 years and over for the regular use by an adult, approved by 81.4% and 68.0% of males and females respectively (Table 2.4).
- A greater proportion of males than females supported the use of tobacco and marijuana/cannabis. Among males, 42.5% and 27.4% supported the regular use by an adult of tobacco and marijuana/cannabis respectively. For females, 36.8% supported the use of tobacco and 20.1% supported the use of marijuana/cannabis.
- Inhalants were the drug least likely to be approved of – supported by 1.1% of males and 0.5% of females.

**Table 2.4: Personal approval of the regular use by an adult of selected drugs, persons aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
	(per cent)						
	<b>Males</b>						
Tobacco	44.8	53.6	50.6	42.9	37.5	25.0	42.5
Alcohol	79.7	85.6	84.2	82.7	83.0	72.3	81.4
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	31.6	44.8	37.1	28.0	16.9	4.5	27.4
Prescribed drugs <sup>(a)</sup>	9.8	13.2	10.0	8.4	6.3	5.4	8.9
Inhalants	0.9	2.5	1.2	0.7	1.0	0.1 *	1.1
Heroin	1.3	2.1	2.5	1.7	1.2	0.2	1.5
Amphetamines/speed	5.1	9.4	5.9	2.9	1.1	0.2	4.1
Cocaine	3.0	6.0	4.7	2.0	1.2	0.2	2.9
Hallucinogens	6.7	12.5	7.0	5.0	2.3	0.3	5.7
Ecstasy/designer drugs	6.9	13.7	6.4	3.2	1.5	0.2	5.3
Methadone <sup>(b)</sup>	1.6	2.7	2.1	1.4	1.8	0.4	1.7
	<b>Females</b>						
Tobacco	47.8	50.3	45.2	35.1	27.4	19.3	36.8
Alcohol	76.3	78.3	72.9	67.8	64.4	52.6	68.0
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	27.3	35.6	26.6	20.7	9.4	3.5	20.1
Prescribed drugs <sup>(a)</sup>	9.7	9.3	6.7	6.9	4.4	4.7	6.8
Inhalants	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.1 *	0.1 *	0.5
Heroin	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.1 *	0.3	0.6
Amphetamines/speed	5.3	5.7	2.5	0.9	0.1 *	0.3	2.3
Cocaine	2.1	3.7	1.8	0.9	0.1 *	0.3	1.5
Hallucinogens	4.5	6.0	2.8	1.7	0.6	0.3	2.5
Ecstasy/designer drugs	4.8	7.3	2.6	1.5	0.1 *	0.3	2.6
Methadone <sup>(b)</sup>	1.1	1.5	1.2	1.1	0.3	0.5	0.9

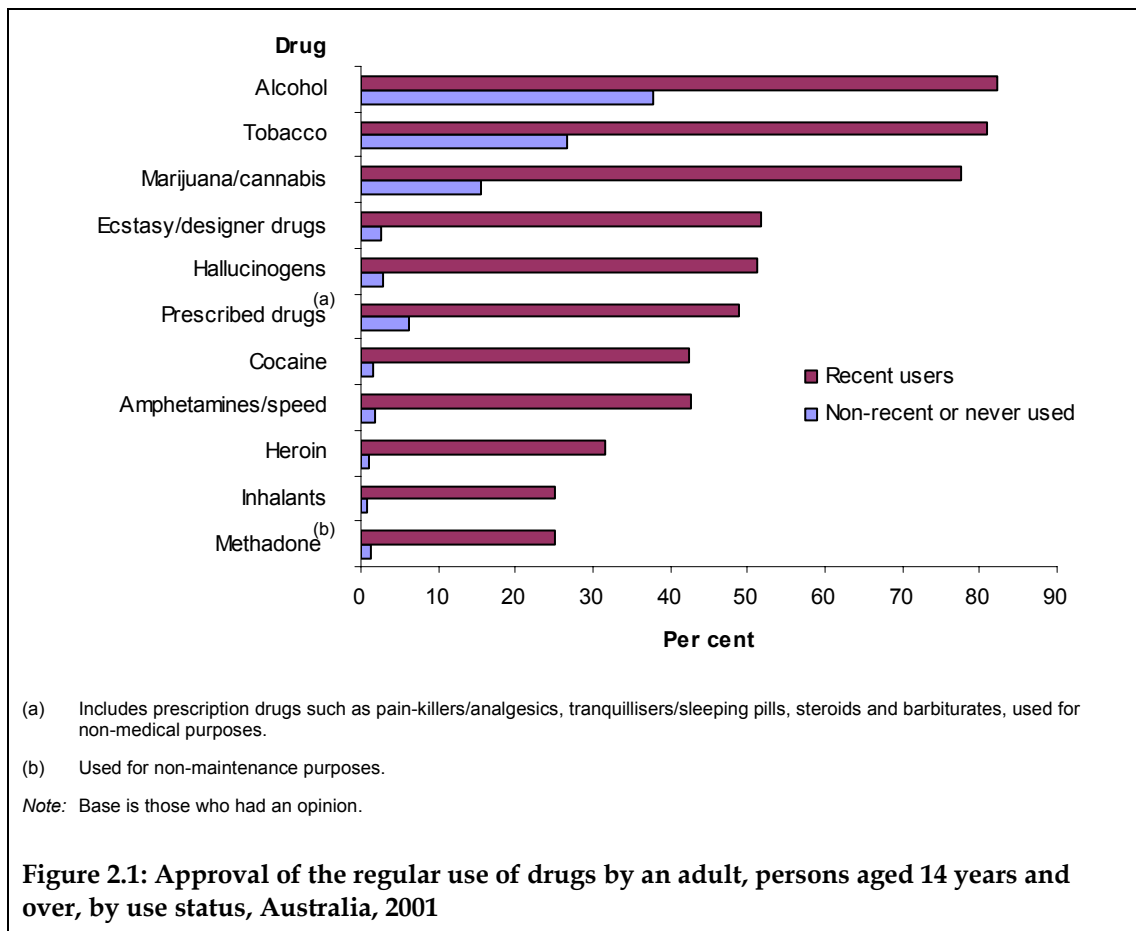
(a) Includes prescription drugs such as pain-killers/analgesics, tranquillisers/sleeping pills, steroids and barbiturates, used for non-medical purposes.

(b) Used for non-maintenance purposes.



Levels of approval for the personal use by an adult of selected drugs differed between recent users and those who had either never used or had not used in the past 12 months (Figure 2.1). In 2001, respondents indicated that:

- alcohol, tobacco and marijuana/cannabis were the drugs most likely to be approved of for personal use, by both recent users and non-recent/never users; and
- for all of the selected drugs, recent users were more likely than non-recent/never users to approve of the regular use by an adult.



## Perceptions of health effects of alcohol use

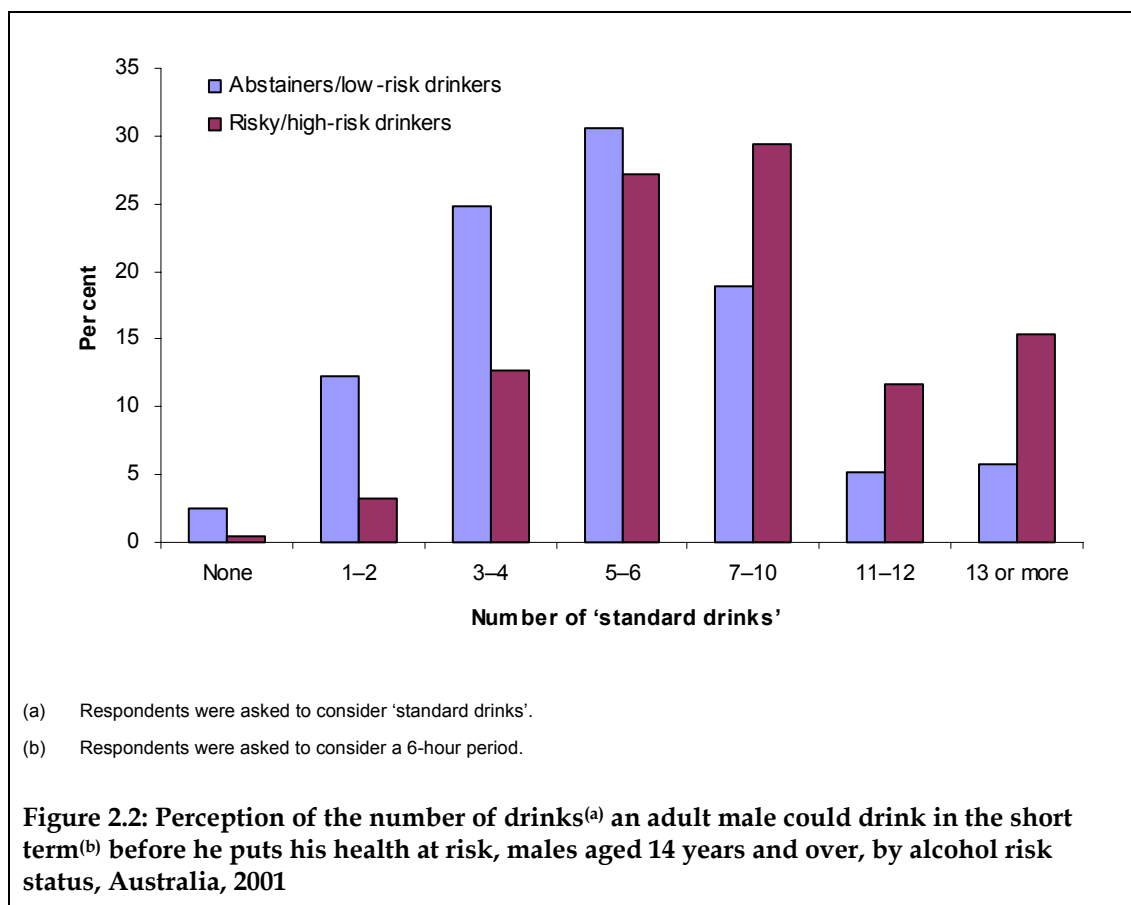
In 2001, the National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) released evidence-based guidelines on alcohol drinking for Australians: *Australian Alcohol Guidelines* (NHMRC 2001). Included are recommendations on the risk of harm in the short term (that is, related to a single drinking occasion) and long term (that is, accruing over many years). The NHMRC guidelines advise that 7 or more standard drinks on any single day would be risky for males in the short term; 5 or more would place females at risk of harm in the short term. For long-term risk, the advice is that regularly drinking 5 or more standard drinks on an average day would be risky or high risk for males. For females, regularly drinking 3 or more drinks a day would be risky or high risk.

The 2001 survey explored respondents' awareness of both the short- and long-term health risks for males and females, related to the consumption of alcohol. Data are presented here on perceptions of (a) the health risk to males in the short and long term from alcohol consumption, and (b) the health risk to females in the short and long term from alcohol consumption.

## Health risk for males

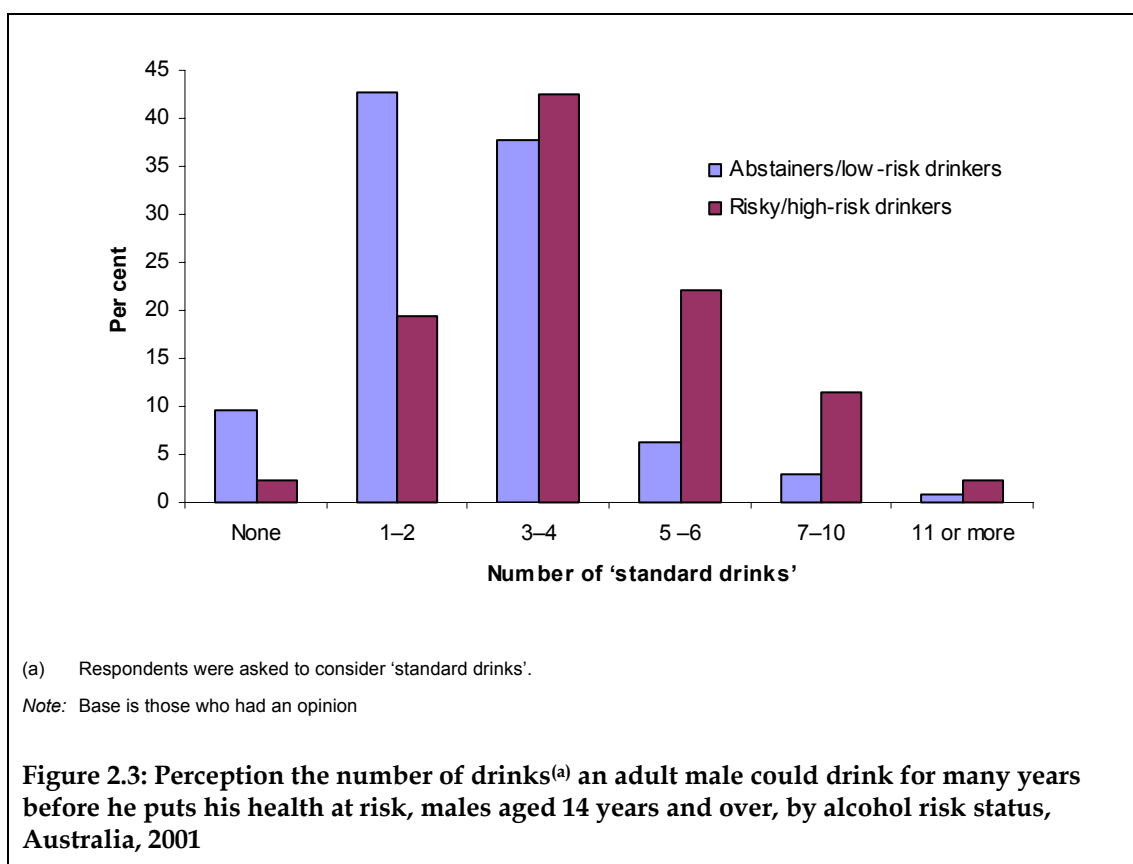
This section presents data on male perceptions of how many standard drinks they thought an adult male could drink in a 6-hour period before he puts his health at risk. Of male respondents, 2.5% of abstainers/low-risk drinkers and 0.5% of risky/high-risk drinkers thought that any alcohol consumption was risky for males in the short term (Figure 2.2). For males, other results include:

- A greater proportion of Australian males aged 14 years and over who were abstainers/low-risk drinkers compared to those who had drunk at risky/high-risk levels in the past 12 months correctly indicated less than seven drinks.
- More than half (56.4%) of males who had drunk at risky/high-risk levels in the past 12 months thought that drinking greater than the advised number of drinks (seven 'standard drinks') would not put a male's health at risk in the short term. Less than three in 10 (29.8%) abstainers/low-risk drinkers nominated seven or more drinks.



The NHMRC guidelines advise that for males five or more standard drinks on an average day would be risky or high risk in the long term. Male respondents were asked to nominate the number of drinks they thought males could drink over a long time without having any adverse affect on their health. It was found that:

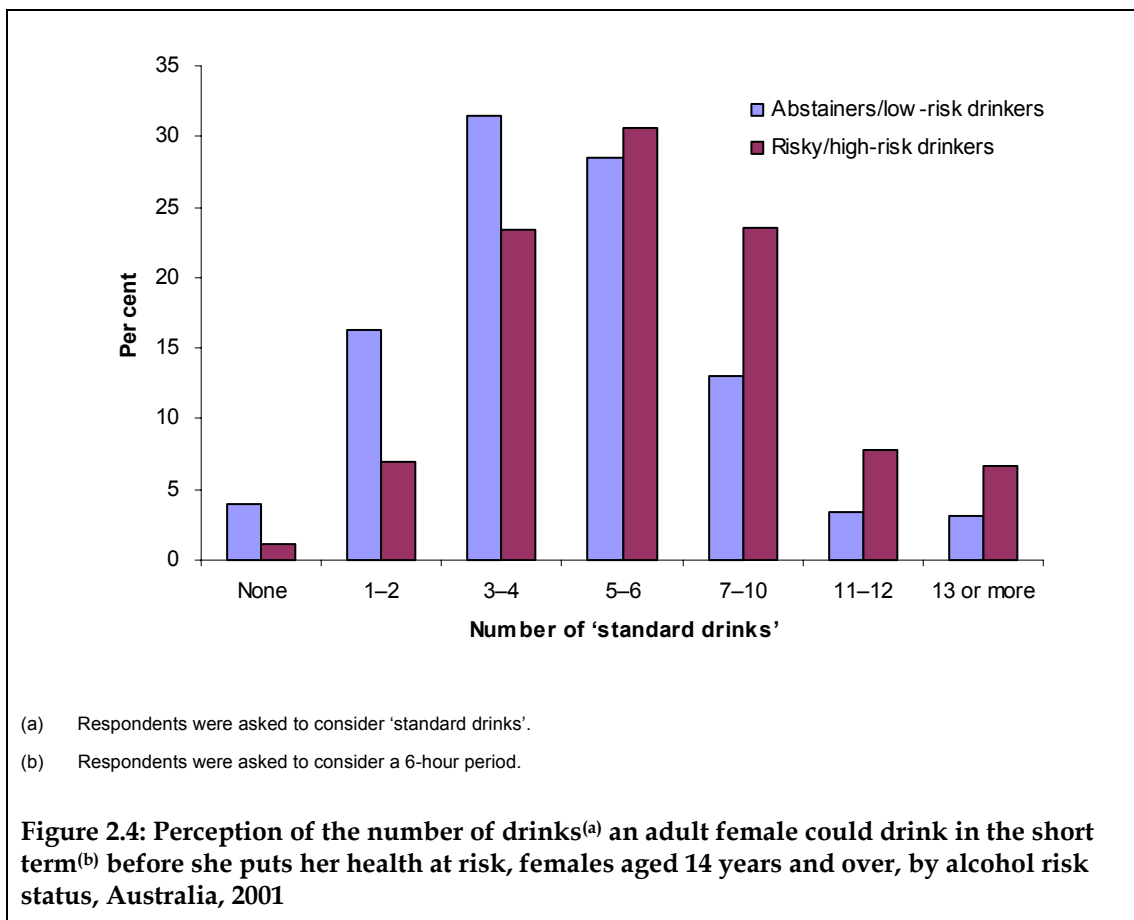
- almost 10% of males who were abstainers/low-risk drinkers in the past 12 months thought that any alcohol consumption would adversely affect a male’s long-term health. Those who had drunk at risky/high-risk levels in the past 12 months were less likely to nominate ‘none’ –selected by 2.2% of this group (Figure 2.3); and
- one in 10 (10.0%) abstainers thought that drinking alcohol at levels above those advised by the NHMRC would not adversely affect a male’s health. This contrasts with 36.0% of risky/high-risk drinkers who thought that five or more drinks a day on a regular basis would not affect a male’s health.



## Health risk for females

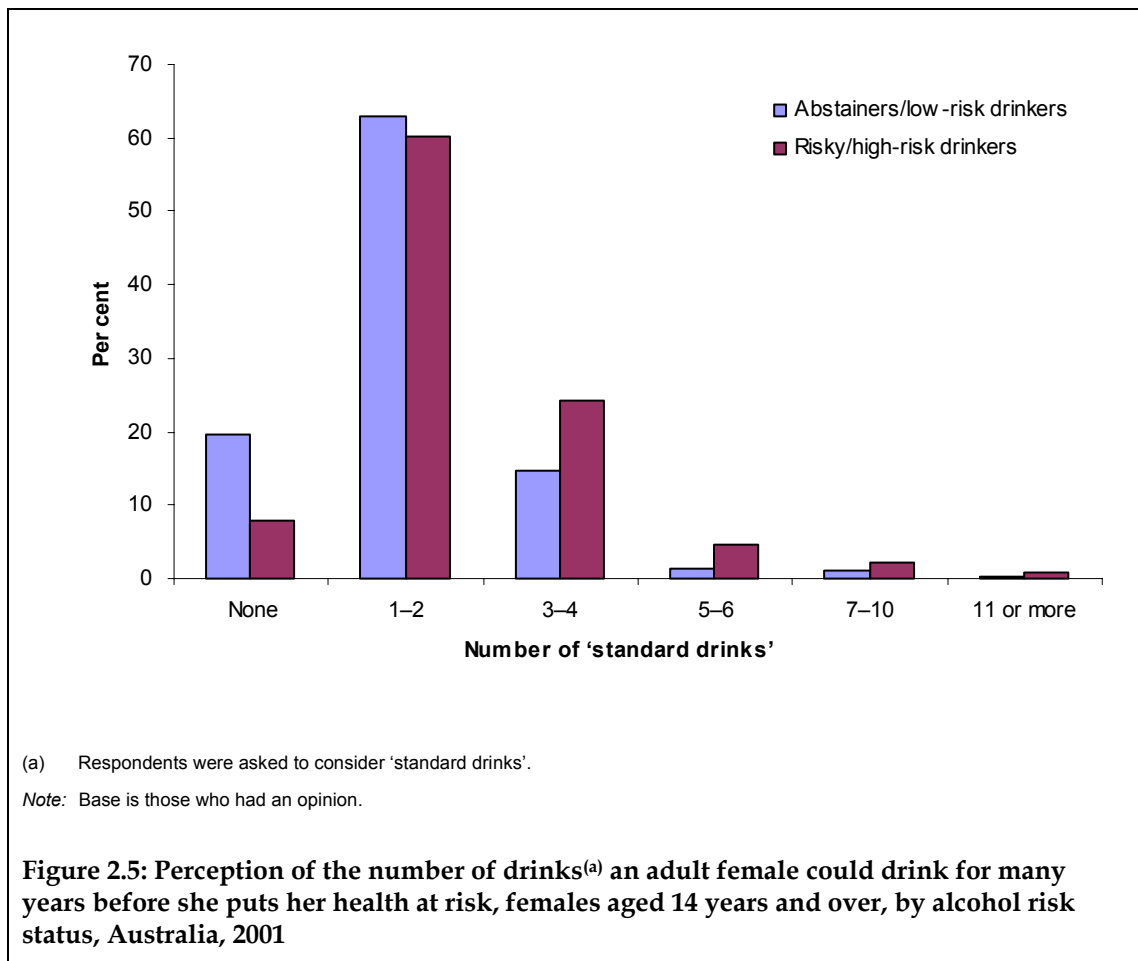
This section presents data on females' perceptions of the number of standard drinks an adult female could drink in a 6-hour period before putting her health at risk:

- Around 4% of abstainers/low-risk drinkers nominated any amount of alcohol to affect a females' health in the short term (Figure 2.4). This was greater than the proportion of females who had drunk at risky/high-risk levels in the past 12 months and nominated zero alcohol (1.1%).
- Less than five was the number of standard drinks selected by more than half (51.8%) of abstainers/low-risk drinkers and one-third (31.4%) of risky/high-risk drinkers.



Female respondents were also asked to nominate the number of drinks they thought females could drink over a long time without having any adverse effect on a female’s health. Fifteen or more standard drinks per week or more than two per day is the level considered by the NHMRC to be risky or high risk for a female’s health in the long term. The survey found that:

- irrespective of alcohol risk status, the most common level of drinking considered by females to not adversely affect long-term health was 1–2 drinks a day (Figure 2.5). Two-thirds (63.0%) of female abstainers/low-risk drinkers and 60.1% of risky/high-risk drinkers nominated 1–2 drinks every day; and
- of those who reported no alcohol consumption or consumption at low-risk levels in the last 12 months, 19.7% considered that any alcohol consumption by a female could adversely affect her health in the long term. This contrasts with 8.0% for females who had consumed at risky or high-risk levels in the last 12 months.



## Perceptions of health effects of tobacco use

Tobacco is the risk factor associated with the greatest burden of disease in Australia. It contributes to an increased risk for heart and vascular diseases, a number of cancers, and respiratory diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma. Ridolfo & Stevenson (2001) attributed 12,943 and 6,076 deaths for males and females, respectively, to tobacco smoke in 1998.

Respondents to the 2001 survey were asked for their thoughts on the health affects on non-smokers of tobacco smoke:

- Nine in 10 (91.9%) never/ex-smokers thought that non-smokers who live with a smoker might one day develop smoke-related health problems. Seven in 10 (73.5%) smokers thought this.
- A greater proportion of smokers (14.6%) than never/ex-smokers (3.9%) thought that living with a smoker would not affect a non-smoker's health.
- When asked of the effect on non-smokers' health due to working with smokers, 89.7% of never/ex-smokers thought there might be an effect compared with 67.0% of smokers.

**Table 2.5: Perception of whether the health of non-smokers living or working with smokers might be affected due to passive smoking, persons aged 14 years and over, by smoking status, Australia, 2001**

Situation and perception	Smokers <sup>(a)</sup>	Never/ex-smokers
	(per cent)	
<b>Live with a smoker</b>		
Yes, might be affected	73.5	91.9
No, won't be affected	14.6	3.9
Don't know	11.9	4.1
<b>Work with a smoker</b>		
Yes, might be affected	67.0	89.7
No, won't be affected	19.4	5.2
Don't know	13.6	5.1

(a) Daily, weekly and less than weekly smoker.

# 3 Availability of drugs

## Offer or opportunity to use drugs

Respondents to the 2001 survey were asked if they had been offered or had the opportunity to use selected drugs in the past 12 months. Alcohol and tobacco were the drugs Australians aged 14 years and over were most likely to have been offered or had the opportunity to use (Table 3.1):

- Nine in 10 (90.4%) Australians had alcohol available for use in the past 12 months and 57.2% had tobacco available for use. For both of these drugs those aged 20–29 years indicated the greatest opportunity for use.
- A greater proportion of males than females had the offer or opportunity to use where opportunity was equal, for all of the selected drugs except prescription drugs.
- Marijuana/cannabis was offered or available to 24.2% of Australians. Of those aged 14–19 years one in two (48.3%) had this drug available for use.

**Table 3.1: Opportunity to use selected drugs in the past 12 months, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
				(per cent)			
Tobacco	70.3	77.7	66.4	44.2	62.7	51.9	57.2
Alcohol	89.2	95.5	93.3	87.9	93.2	87.7	90.4
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	48.3	50.1	28.6	8.7	28.0	20.4	24.2
Prescribed drugs <sup>(a)</sup>	39.4	49.3	49.3	45.5	46.2	46.2	46.2
Inhalants	6.8	6.1	2.9	1.7	4.3	2.2	3.2
Heroin	3.5	3.4	1.3	0.5	2.0	1.0	1.5
Amphetamines/speed	15.8	21.8	7.1	1.3	9.3	5.8	7.6
Cocaine	5.5	10.1	3.7	0.7	4.3	2.6	3.4
Hallucinogens	9.8	12.6	3.7	0.6	5.6	3.0	4.3
Ecstasy/designer drugs	16.4	24.1	6.6	1.1	9.7	6.0	7.8

(a) Includes prescription drugs such as pain-killers/analgesics, tranquillisers/sleeping pills, steroids and barbiturates used for non-medical purposes.

## Acceptance of the offer or opportunity to use drugs

The 2001 survey identified the proportion of those that had been both offered or had the opportunity to use selected drugs in the past 12 months, and used the selected drug in the last 12 months. When available, marijuana/cannabis was the illicit drug most likely to have also been used (Table 3.2). Those who had been offered or had the opportunity to use selected drugs in the past 12 months also reported that:

- less than 10% of those who had prescription drugs available for use had used them for non-medical purposes in the last 12 months;
- females (25.5%) were more likely than males (16.1%) to have had heroin available in the past 12 months and to have used; and
- those aged 40 years and over (27.4%) were almost twice as likely as 14–19 year olds (14.8%) to have had heroin available in the past 12 months and to have used.

**Table 3.2: Recent drug use, persons aged 14 years and over who had the opportunity to use, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
Tobacco	29.7	43.8	46.6	43.7	42.9	42.1	42.5
Alcohol	82.8	94.6	93.5	91.9	92.5	91.0	91.7
Illicit drugs							
Marijuana/cannabis	52.3	60.7	58.3	52.1	59.5	53.0	56.7
Prescribed drugs <sup>(a)</sup>	13.0	13.4	8.5	7.7	9.5	9.3	9.4
Inhalants	16.4	18.2	19.5	7.8	15.3	15.0	15.2
Heroin	14.8	17.0	22.9	27.4	16.1	25.5	19.2
Amphetamines/speed	42.2	54.7	46.9	37.7	48.3	49.8	48.9
Cocaine	25.6	44.1	44.2	44.0	39.0	44.2	41.0
Hallucinogens	28.1	38.9	33.3	10.1	33.3	31.8	32.8
Ecstasy/designer drugs	32.1	45.6	38.8	25.1	38.9	41.6	39.9

(a) Includes prescription drugs such as pain-killers/analgesics, tranquillisers/sleeping pills, steroids and barbiturates used for non-medical purposes.

Note: Base for each row is those who reported having been offered or had the opportunity to use in the past 12 months.



## Ease of obtaining illicit drugs

Survey respondents were asked how difficult or easy they thought it would be for them to obtain selected illicit drugs, if they wanted them. Australians aged 14 years and over considered that marijuana/cannabis would be the easiest drug to obtain, nominated as easy by one in two (49.2%) Australians (Table 3.3). Other results include:

- The age groups 14–19 and 20–29 years were most likely to consider marijuana/cannabis easy to obtain.
- Aside from marijuana/cannabis, respondents typically did not know whether obtaining illicit drugs would be easy or difficult. For heroin, amphetamines, hallucinogens, cocaine and ecstasy/designer drugs around two in five nominated 'don't know'.
- For each of the selected drugs, a greater proportion of males than females considered the obtaining of drugs to be 'easy'.
- Those aged 20–29 years were more likely than other age groups to consider illicit drugs to be easy to obtain. Almost one in two considered amphetamines (45.0%) and ecstasy/designer drugs (47.8%) 'easy' to obtain.

**Table 3.3: Perception of the ease of obtaining selected illicit drugs, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
Marijuana/cannabis							
Easy <sup>(a)</sup>	73.2	75.2	60.1	31.8	54.4	44.0	49.2
Don't know	11.0	9.8	22.7	38.8	25.1	30.2	27.7
Heroin							
Easy	18.4	25.0	19.6	12.4	19.7	13.6	16.6
Don't know	23.7	24.0	37.6	45.8	36.1	40.0	38.1
Amphetamines							
Easy	32.2	45.0	29.7	14.7	28.5	20.9	24.7
Don't know	21.5	19.1	34.5	45.5	34.3	38.1	36.3
Hallucinogens							
Easy	22.2	31.0	19.9	10.3	20.4	13.6	17.0
Don't know	27.2	24.5	39.1	47.9	38.0	41.8	39.9
Cocaine							
Easy	19.2	26.2	19.4	10.7	18.8	13.1	16.0
Don't know	22.8	22.7	37.6	46.7	36.2	40.3	38.2
Ecstasy/designer drugs							
Easy	35.9	47.8	28.4	13.6	29.0	20.6	24.8
Don't know	20.9	18.4	35.5	46.2	34.4	38.7	36.6

(a) Responses of 'fairly easy' and 'very easy' were grouped to form 'easy'.

### Notes

1. Respondents could select from 'probably impossible', 'very difficult', 'fairly difficult', 'fairly easy', 'very easy' and 'don't know'.
2. Respondents could only select one response.

For the selected drugs, the 2001 survey showed that perceptions of the ease of obtaining differed between those who had never used, ex-users and recent users:

- Across all selected drugs, perception of ease of obtaining was substantially higher among recent or ex-users than among never users.
- More than nine in 10 (95.3%) recent users considered marijuana/cannabis 'easy' to obtain (Table 3.4). This drug was considered 'easy' to obtain by 76.0% and 32.1% of ex-users and never users respectively.

**Table 3.4: Perception of the ease of obtaining selected drugs, persons aged 14 years and over, by user status, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Never used	Ex-user	Recent user
	(per cent)		
Marijuana/cannabis			
Easy <sup>(a)</sup>	32.1	76.0	95.3
Don't know	37.6	11.4	1.4
Heroin			
Easy	16.0	60.4	53.5
Don't know	38.4	11.7	15.0
Amphetamines			
Easy	19.7	66.8	89.5
Don't know	39.1	8.8	1.5
Hallucinoogens			
Easy	45.9	91.5	96.3
Don't know	29.5	2.6	0.4
Cocaine			
Easy	14.1	51.5	72.4
Don't know	39.5	10.6	3.7
Ecstasy/designer drugs			
Easy	20.9	77.7	93.3
Don't know	38.6	4.4	1.0

(a) Responses of 'fairly easy' and 'very easy' were grouped to form 'easy'.

# 4 Use of tobacco

## Introduction

Tobacco smoking is responsible for the greatest burden on the health of Australians compared to all other risk factors for disease (AIHW: Mathers et al. 1999). It contributes to more drug-related hospital separations and deaths than alcohol and illicit drug use combined. In recent years, the number of deaths attributed to tobacco smoking has declined slightly; however, the number of hospital separations has increased (AIHW: Miller & Draper 2001).

The proportion of Australians aged 14 years and over who smoked daily declined between 1998 and 2001, from 21.8% to 19.5%.

Australians who have ceased smoking show no significant difference in mean age of initiation than those who still smoke. Males are significantly more likely to commence smoking at a younger age (15.1 years) than females (16.3 years).

Recent smokers spent an average of \$41.89 on tobacco weekly.

## Tobacco smoking status

Approximately 3.6 million Australians aged 14 years and over were smokers in 2001. Over one-quarter (26.2%) of the population were ex-smokers (Table 4.1). Other findings include:

- Under one in five (19.5%) Australians aged 14 years and over smoked daily, 1.6% smoked weekly and 2.0% smoked less often than weekly.
- Males were more likely than females to smoke daily, weekly or less often than weekly.
- Smoking rates peaked in the 20-29 years age group.

**Table 4.1: Tobacco smoking status, persons aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Smoking status	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
(per cent)							
<b>Males</b>							
Daily	14.1	28.5	27.3	23.6	20.3	10.2	21.1
Weekly	2.7	3.3	2.8	1.3	1.2	0.7	2.0
Less than weekly	3.4	5.1	2.8	2.3	1.7	0.6	2.6
Ex-smokers <sup>(a)</sup>	4.0	12.4	21.8	33.9	44.2	53.0	29.6
Never smoked <sup>(b)</sup>	75.9	50.7	45.4	38.9	32.5	35.5	44.7
<b>Females</b>							
Daily	16.2	23.7	24.3	20.8	16.1	7.8	18.0
Weekly	2.0	2.3	1.7	1.1	0.7	0.2	1.3
Less than weekly	2.4	3.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.3	1.5
Ex-smokers <sup>(a)</sup>	4.7	17.1	25.6	29.0	26.0	26.6	22.9
Never smoked <sup>(b)</sup>	74.7	53.7	46.7	47.8	56.4	65.2	56.4
<b>Persons</b>							
Daily	15.1	26.1	25.7	22.2	18.2	8.9	19.5
Weekly	2.3	2.8	2.2	1.2	1.0	0.4	1.6
Less than weekly	2.9	4.1	2.3	1.8	1.2	0.4	2.0
Ex-smokers <sup>(a)</sup>	4.4	14.7	23.7	31.5	35.3	38.7	26.2
Never smoked <sup>(b)</sup>	75.3	52.2	46.1	43.3	44.3	51.6	50.6

(a) Smoked at least 100 cigarettes or the equivalent tobacco in their life, but reported no longer smoking.

(b) Never smoked more than 100 cigarettes or the equivalent tobacco in their life.

## Type of tobacco smoked

Respondents were asked if they now smoked manufactured cigarettes, roll-your-own cigarettes, cigars or pipes:

- Manufactured cigarettes were by far the most commonly used form of tobacco (92.0%) (Table 4.2). Female smokers (95.2%) were more likely than males (89.3%) to smoke manufactured cigarettes.
- About one-quarter of smokers used roll-your-own cigarettes (26.7%). Males (32.8%) were more likely than females (19.4%) to smoke this kind of tobacco.
- Cigars and pipes were the least common type of tobacco used by smokers (13.5%). Males (20.2%) were almost four times more likely than females (5.5%) to smoke cigars or pipes.

**Table 4.2: Type of tobacco smoked, smokers aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Type	Males	Females	Persons
(per cent)			
Manufactured cigarettes	89.3	95.2	92.0
Roll-your-own cigarettes	32.8	19.4	26.7
Cigars or pipes	20.2	5.5	13.5

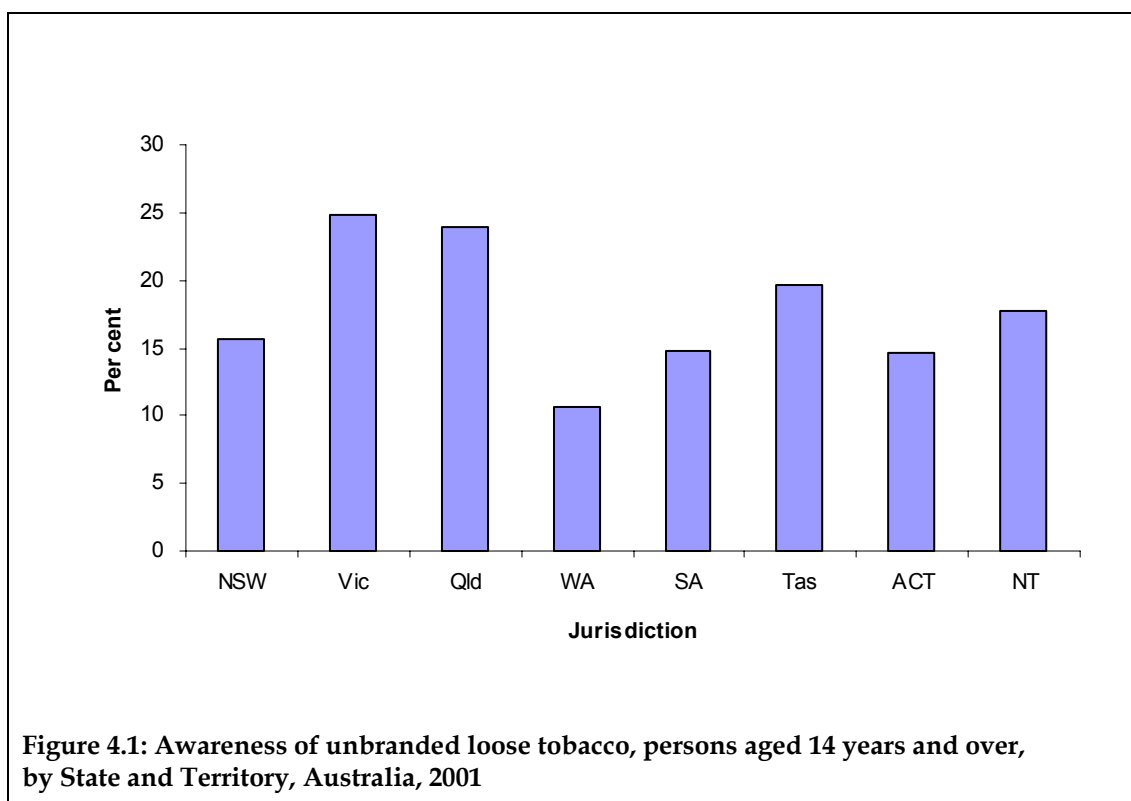
### Notes

1. Base equals daily, weekly and less than weekly smokers.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Unbranded loose tobacco

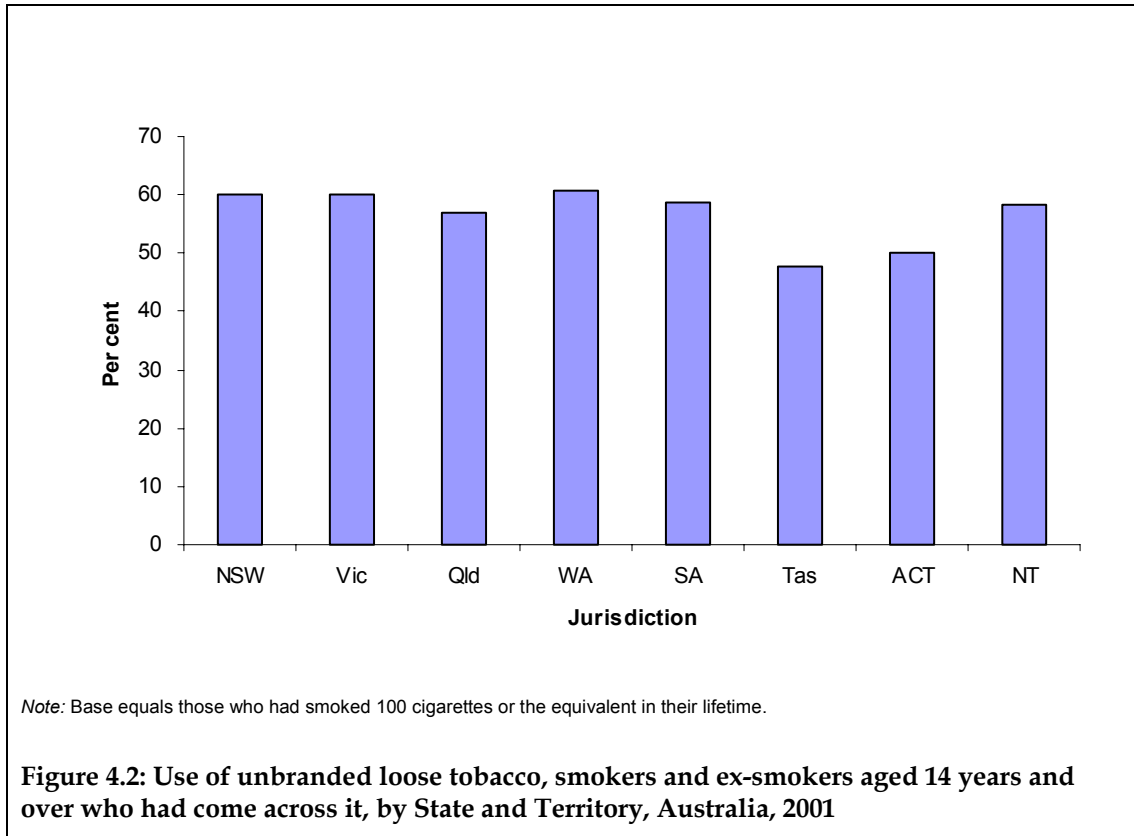
The 2001 survey included a new section on unbranded loose tobacco, otherwise known as 'chop-chop'. Almost one in five (19.0%) Australians aged 14 years and over had come across unbranded loose tobacco:

- Almost one-quarter of residents of Victoria (24.9%) and Queensland (24.0%) had come across unbranded loose tobacco (Figure 4.1).
- Western Australia was the jurisdiction with the lowest proportion of residents who had come across unbranded loose tobacco (10.6%).



The majority (58.6%) of smokers and ex-smokers who had come across unbranded loose tobacco had smoked it at least once:

- In the majority of jurisdictions, around 60% of smokers and ex-smokers who had come across unbranded loose tobacco had smoked it at least once (Figure 4.2). The proportions in the Australian Capital Territory (50.2%) and Tasmania were slightly lower (47.8%).



## Changes to smoking behaviour

Smokers were asked if they had changed their smoking behaviour in the last 12 months (Table 4.3):

- The most common change to behaviour among smokers was a reduction in the amount of tobacco smoked per day (34.2%).
- Three in 10 (30.8%) smokers had tried unsuccessfully to give up smoking.
- One in five female smokers (21.6%) and fewer than one in five male smokers (17.3%) changed to lower tar or nicotine content cigarettes.

**Table 4.3: Changes to smoking behaviour, recent smokers aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Behaviour	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Given up for more than 1 month	24.6	25.1	24.8
Tried to give up unsuccessfully	30.1	31.6	30.8
Changed to lower tar or nicotine content	17.3	21.6	19.3
Tried to change to lower tar or nicotine content unsuccessfully	3.9	4.1	4.0
Reduced amount smoked daily	33.0	35.7	34.2
Tried to reduce amount smoked daily unsuccessfully	14.0	15.2	14.5
None of the above	24.2	19.4	22.0

**Notes**

1. Base equals those who reported smoking in the last 12 months.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Motivators for change to behaviour

Those who reported a change in their behaviour in the last 12 months (Table 4.3) were asked what motivated them to change (Table 4.4):

- The main motivator for both males and females who changed behaviour was that smoking was considered to be costing too much (54.0%).
- The second most common reason nominated was that smoking was affecting health or fitness (50.6%).
- One-third (33.8%) wanted to get fit. Males (36.7%) were more likely than females (30.5%) to nominate this factor.

**Table 4.4: Factors which motivated change to smoking behaviour, smokers aged 14 years and over who reported a change in behaviour, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Motivator	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Affecting health or fitness	51.5	49.5	50.6
Wanted to get fit	36.7	30.5	33.8
Advice from doctor	17.1	16.6	16.8
Family/friends asked me to quit	29.6	28.1	28.9
Anti-smoking advertisements	24.8	28.2	26.4
Health warnings on packets	19.1	18.5	18.8
Tobacco Information Line (advertised on packet)	1.0	0.7	0.8
QUIT line	3.3	4.3	3.8
Pregnant or wanting to start a family	1.1	11.3	5.9
Smoking restrictions in public areas	10.3	11.2	10.7
Smoking restrictions in the workplace	8.7	6.2	7.5
Costing too much	53.1	55.1	54.0
Worried it was affecting the health of those around me	19.5	25.2	22.2
Other	9.5	10.7	10.1

### Notes

1. Base equals those who reported undertaking measures in Table 4.3.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Characteristics by smoking status

In 2001, 50.6% of the population aged 14 years and over had never smoked, 26.2% were ex-smokers and 23.2% smoked. The distribution of these groups varied with different population characteristics (Table 4.5):

- Three in five (61.5%) never married people were never smokers, compared with around half of those divorced/separated/widowed (45.0%) and married/de facto (47.0%).
- A higher proportion of people whose main language spoken at home was English smoked than those whose main language was not English.
- The proportions of smokers increased with greater socioeconomic disadvantage.

**Table 4.5: Characteristics by smoking status, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Never smoked</b>	<b>Ex-smoker</b>	<b>Smoker</b>
	<b>(per cent)</b>		
<b>Education</b>			
Without post-school qualification	53.3	22.4	24.2
With post-school qualification	48.4	29.6	22.0
<b>Labour force status</b>			
Currently employed	47.0	27.1	25.9
Student	74.6	7.3	18.1
Unemployed	37.6	18.2	44.3
Retired/pension/home duties	49.4	32.7	17.9
<b>Main language spoken at home</b>			
English	49.3	27.1	23.6
Other	68.0	14.2	17.8
<b>Socioeconomic status</b>			
1st quintile	48.0	26.2	25.8
2nd quintile	49.2	25.7	25.1
3rd quintile	50.0	26.3	23.7
4th quintile	50.1	26.3	23.6
5th quintile	54.9	26.7	18.4
<b>Geography</b>			
Urban	52.1	25.4	22.5
Rural/remote	46.7	28.3	25.0
<b>Marital status</b>			
Never married	61.5	10.4	28.0
Divorced/separated/widowed	45.0	28.2	26.7
Married/de facto	47.0	32.5	20.5
<b>Indigenous status</b>			
Indigenous	37.7	12.4	49.9
Non-Indigenous	50.8	26.4	22.8



## Characteristics by mean number of cigarettes smoked per week

The mean number of cigarettes smoked per week by current smokers varied with different population characteristics (Table 4.6). As reported in *First Results* (AIHW 2002), the average number of cigarettes smoked per week by male smokers was 111.8 and 106.5 by female smokers.

- Not only does prevalence of smoking increase with socioeconomic disadvantage (Table 4.5), the average number of cigarettes smoked per week also increases with disadvantage. Smokers in the most disadvantaged quintile smoked on average 122.4 cigarettes per week, compared with 86.6 cigarettes by those in the most advantaged quintile.
- People whose main language spoken at home was a language other than English smoked on average 86.8 cigarettes per week, compared with 110.3 cigarettes per week for those whose main language spoken at home was English. The prevalence of smoking among people whose main language spoken at home was a language other than English (17.8%) was also lower than the other group (23.6%).
- When comparing employment status, students smoked the lowest average number of cigarettes per week (59.5), and people who were retired/on a pension/or doing home duties smoked the highest (130.4).
- The prevalence of smokers was slightly higher in rural/remote areas (25.0%) compared with urban areas (22.5%) and the average number of cigarettes smoked per week was also higher in rural/remote areas (116.2) compared with urban areas (106.0).
- A higher proportion of Indigenous Australians smoked compared with non-Indigenous Australians, and the average number of cigarettes smoked per week was also higher (125.4 and 108.3 respectively).

**Table 4.6: Mean number of cigarettes smoked per week, current smokers aged 14 years and over, by social characteristics, Australia, 2001**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Persons</b>
		<b>(number)</b>	
<b>Education</b>			
Without post-school qualification	116.6	111.6	114.0
With post-school qualification	106.7	97.6	103.2
<b>Labour force status</b>			
Currently employed	111.1	98.3	106.3
Student	54.9	64.6	59.5
Unemployed	121.1	116.5	119.5
Retired/pension/home duties	137.6	127.0	130.4
<b>Main language spoken at home</b>			
English	112.9	107.2	110.3
Other	91.0	75.7	86.8
<b>Socioeconomic status</b>			
1st quintile	128.8	115.2	122.4
2nd quintile	122.0	113.6	118.1
3rd quintile	107.2	106.5	106.9
4th quintile	110.4	99.3	105.3
5th quintile	85.6	87.9	86.6
<b>Geography</b>			
Urban	108.5	103.0	106.0
Rural/remote	118.1	113.7	116.2
<b>Marital status</b>			
Never married	93.3	86.5	90.5
Divorced/separated/widowed	133.4	130.1	131.6
Married/de facto	118.8	109.8	114.8
<b>Indigenous status</b>			
Indigenous	132.6	119.2	125.4
Non-Indigenous	110.8	105.3	108.3

Note: Base equals daily, weekly and less than weekly smokers.

# 5 Use of alcohol

## Introduction

Alcohol is the second greatest cause of drug-related deaths and hospitalisations in Australia. In 1998, the number of deaths attributed to alcohol consumption was estimated to be 3,271 (AIHW: Miller & Draper 2001). For the same year, the number of hospital separations attributable to alcohol consumption was about 43,000 (AIHW: Ridolfo & Stevenson 2001).

The average age at which males first consumed a full glass of alcohol was 16.2 years, whereas for females it was 17.6 years.

In 2001 the average amount of money spent by recent drinkers on alcohol was \$19.56 per week.

The National Health & Medical Research Council's *Australian Alcohol Guidelines* (NHMRC 2001) outline patterns of drinking associated with risk of alcohol-related harm. The risk of harm (particularly injury or death) in the short term is associated with given levels of drinking on a single day. The level of long-term risk is associated with regular daily patterns of drinking, defined by the total amount of alcohol typically consumed per week. Low risk is a level of drinking at which there is only a minimal risk of harm, and there may be health benefits for some of the population. Risky levels are those at which risk of harm is significantly increased beyond any possible benefits. High-risk drinking levels are those at which there is substantial risk of serious harm, and risk increases rapidly as these levels are surpassed.

**Table 5.1: National Health & Medical Research Council Australian alcohol guidelines**

	Low risk	Risky	High risk
	(Standard drinks)		
<b>Risk of harm in the short term</b>			
Males	Up to 6 (on any one day, no more than 3 days per week)	7 to 10 (on any one day)	11 or more (on any one day)
Females	Up to 4 (on any one day, no more than 3 days per week)	5 to 6 (on any one day)	7 or more (on any one day)
<b>Risk of harm in the long term</b>			
Males			
On an average day	Up to 4 (per day)	5 to 6 (per day)	7 or more (per day)
Overall weekly level	Up to 28 (per week)	29 to 42 (per week)	43 or more (per week)
Females			
On an average day	Up to 2 (per day)	3 to 4 (per day)	5 or more (per day)
Overall weekly level	Up to 14 (per week)	15 to 28 (per week)	29 or more (per week)

Source: NHMRC 2001.

## Alcohol consumption risk status

In 2001, 17.5% of Australians aged 14 years and over had not consumed alcohol in the previous 12 months. Among those who had consumed alcohol, some drank at levels of potential harm in the short term on at least one occasion in the last 12 months, some in the long term only and others at both (Table 5.2):

- Almost one in two (46.8%) Australians drank at levels considered at low risk of harm in the short and long term.
- One-quarter (25.9%) of the population drank at low-risk levels for alcohol-related harm in the long term but risky or high-risk levels for short-term harm.
- Less than one in 10 (8.5%) drank at levels considered risky or high risk for both short-term and long-term harm.

**Table 5.2: Risk of harm in the long term by risk of harm in the short term on at least one occasion in the past 12 months, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

Long-term risk	Abstainer	Short-term risk		Total
		Low risk	Risky or high risk	
		(per cent)		
Abstainer	17.5	–	–	17.5
Low risk	–	46.8	25.9	72.7
Risky or high risk	–	1.3	8.5	9.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Base equals total population.

- The proportions of males and females drinking at risky or high-risk levels for harm in the long term were similar (10.2% and 9.4% respectively).
- People in the 20–29 years age group were most likely to consume alcohol in a way that puts them at risk for long-term alcohol-related harm. This age group was also the least likely to abstain from alcohol.
- At all ages, greater proportions of the population drink at levels that are risky or high risk for short-term harm compared with risk for long-term harm.
- Males (39.3%) were more likely than females (29.6%) to drink, on at least one occasion in the last 12 months, at levels that put them at risk for short-term alcohol-related harm.

## Type of alcohol consumed

Those who had consumed alcohol in the last 12 months were asked in 2001 what type of alcohol they usually drank:

- Males drinking at low or risky and high-risk levels of harm in the long term most commonly consumed regular strength beer, except for those aged 40 years and over who commonly drank bottled wine (Table 5.3).
- For females, the type of drink most commonly consumed by those at low or risky and high risk of harm in the short term was the same as for those who consumed at low or risky or high risk of harm in the long term. The types of drink ranged from pre-mixed bottles to bottled spirits and liqueurs to bottled wine.
- Male teenagers drinking at low or risky and high-risk levels for harm in the short or long term most commonly drank regular strength beer. Female teenagers drinking at low-risk levels of harm in the short or long term most commonly drank pre-mixed bottles, whereas those who drank at risky or high-risk levels most commonly drank bottled spirits and liqueurs.

**Table 5.3: Type of alcohol consumed, recent drinkers aged 14 years and over, by long-term risk status, Australia, 2001**

Age group	Long-term risk	
	Low risk	Risky and high risk
<b>Males</b>		
14–19	Regular strength beer	Regular strength beer
20–29	Regular strength beer	Regular strength beer
30–39	Regular strength beer	Regular strength beer
40+	Bottled wine	Regular strength beer
<b>Females</b>		
14–19	Pre-mixed bottles	Bottled spirits and liqueurs
20–29	Bottled spirits and liqueurs	Bottled spirits and liqueurs
30–39	Bottled wine	Bottled wine
40+	Bottled wine	Bottled wine

Note: Base equals recent drinkers.

- The type of alcohol usually drunk by each sex, age group and risk level did not vary between risk of harm in the short term and risk in the long term, with the exception of males aged 20–29 years who preferred bottled spirits and liqueurs.

## Usual place of use of alcohol

Those who had consumed alcohol in the last 12 months were asked where they usually drank alcohol (Table 5.4):

- The most commonly nominated usual place for consuming alcohol was in the home. The proportion of male and female drinkers usually consuming alcohol in their home increased with age.
- The proportions nominating private parties as the usual place of alcohol consumption decreases with age. Private parties are the most common locations for the consumption of alcohol by teenagers.
- The proportions usually consuming in restaurants and/or cafes peaks at 30–39 years, and for licensed premises (pubs, clubs) proportions peaked at 20–29 years.

**Table 5.4: Usual place of consumption of alcohol, recent drinkers aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Location	14–19		20–29		30–39		40+	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
	(per cent)							
In my home	61.5	61.1	74.3	76.6	85.5	84.4	88.7	84.4
At friend's house	62.9	63.9	67.7	66.2	64.2	65.4	48.4	52.4
At private parties	67.8	70.2	62.7	60.7	54.0	55.4	39.6	43.3
At raves/dance parties	22.9	24.5	18.0	12.2	4.2	3.1	2.2	1.3
At restaurants/cafes	22.4	25.5	55.4	61.6	57.3	63.1	48.7	56.9
At licensed premises	37.1	38.8	75.5	73.7	59.9	51.1	46.9	37.6
At school/TAFE/university, etc.	6.2	3.4	6.3	2.7	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.4
At workplace	5.8	2.7	14.3	8.6	14.0	4.7	5.5	2.7
In public places	14.1	10.6	8.5	2.9	4.2	2.9	2.2	1.4
In a car	12.2	7.0	8.8	2.5	4.3	1.3	1.3	0.3
Somewhere else	8.3	7.2	5.1	1.6	3.3	1.1	1.6	0.9

### Notes

1. Base equals recent drinkers.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Moderating drinking behaviour

Those who consumed alcohol in the last 12 months were asked if they undertook any measures to limit their blood alcohol levels. The proportions that always or most of the time undertook these measures varied between age and sex (Table 5.5):

- The proportion of recent drinkers who always or most of the time made a point of eating while consuming alcohol increased with age. In all age groups females were more likely than males to undertake this behaviour.
- Higher proportions of females in each age group compared with males always or most of the time limited the number of drinks they had (e.g. when driving). For both males and females, the proportions who do so increased with age.
- For all age groups, higher proportions of females compared with males always or most of the time refused an alcoholic drink when it was offered but they didn't want it. The proportions that did refuse increased with age.

**Table 5.5: Blood alcohol limiting measures undertaken always or most of the times, recent drinkers aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Measure	14–19		20–29		30–39		40+	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
	(per cent)							
Count number of drinks consumed	55.5	52.0	49.2	57.5	50.4	61.3	53.4	65.1
Alternate between alcohol and non-alcoholic drinks	17.7	23.3	15.3	26.6	16.9	34.0	15.8	37.0
Make a point of eating while consuming	43.7	43.8	43.1	57.9	53.1	70.2	59.4	74.1
Quench thirst before having alcohol	27.5	30.4	30.3	40.5	29.4	44.4	23.5	41.9
Drink low-alcohol drinks only	9.2	20.4	11.2	11.4	17.3	13.1	32.0	22.2
Limit number of drinks	51.5	56.0	69.7	79.9	80.0	89.5	88.2	91.6
Refuse alcoholic drink offered when not want it	47.0	60.2	50.9	72.5	54.0	74.2	61.1	75.6

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent drinkers.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Alcohol-induced memory lapse

Those who had consumed alcohol in the last 12 months were asked how often they had been unable to remember afterwards what happened while they were drinking (Table 5.6):

- Compared to all other age groups, teenagers were most likely to have had an incident where they could not remember afterwards what happened while drinking, at least weekly (4.4%) and at least monthly (10.9%).
- On at least one occasion in the last 12 months, one in nine (11.9%) male drinkers aged 40 years and over and fewer than one in 10 (6.6%) female drinkers aged 40 years and over had been unable to remember afterwards what happened while drinking.

**Table 5.6: Loss of memory after drinking at least once in the last 12 months, recent drinkers aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Age group	Frequency			
	At least weekly	At least monthly	At least once in last 12 months	Never
(per cent)				
<b>Males</b>				
14–19	5.5	10.7	27.4	56.5
20–29	4.6	10.2	33.2	52.1
30–39	3.4	4.2	22.5	69.9
40+	3.1	2.6	11.9	82.3
<b>Females</b>				
14–19	3.4	11.1	29.5	55.9
20–29	2.6	5.0	28.0	64.5
30–39	2.6	1.7	13.6	82.1
40+	1.6	1.0	6.6	90.7
<b>Persons</b>				
14–19	4.4	10.9	28.4	56.2
20–29	3.6	7.7	30.6	58.1
30–39	3.0	3.0	18.1	76.0
40+	2.4	1.8	9.4	86.3

Note: Base equals recent drinkers.

## Alcohol reduction

### Methods of reduction

Those who had consumed alcohol in the last 12 months were asked if they had reduced the amount of alcohol or number of times they drank, consumed more low-alcohol drinks, or ceased drinking (Table 5.7):

- Males at low risk of alcohol-related harm in the short and long term were more likely than females at low risk to have reduced the amount of alcohol drunk per session, to have reduced the number of sessions, drunk more low-alcohol drinks and to have stopped drinking.
- Females drinking at risky or high-risk levels for alcohol-related harm in the short and long term were more likely than males drinking at risky or high risk levels to have reduced the amount drunk per session, reduced the number of times they drank and stopped drinking. However, these males were more likely than females to have drunk more low-alcohol drinks.



**Table 5.7: Reduction in alcohol consumption, recent drinkers aged 14 years and over, by short- and long-term risk status, Australia, 2001**

Measure	Short-term risk		Long-term risk	
	Low risk	Risky or high risk	Low risk	Risky or high risk
(per cent)				
<b>Males</b>				
Reduced amount drunk per session	26.3	31.0	28.2	29.8
Reduced the number of times drunk	22.9	31.5	27.5	21.7
Drank more low-alcohol drinks	12.5	12.8	12.8	11.2
Stopped drinking	3.2	2.4	2.9	2.5
None of the above	54.1	49.7	51.7	54.8
<b>Females</b>				
Reduced amount drunk per session	21.5	35.5	25.4	36.0
Reduced the number of times drunk	20.6	34.1	25.0	29.9
Drank more low-alcohol drinks	6.0	6.7	6.0	8.0
Stopped drinking	5.2	4.1	5.0	3.2
None of the above	61.9	48.4	58.0	48.6
<b>Persons</b>				
Reduced amount drunk per session	23.8	33.0	26.9	32.8
Reduced the number of times drunk	21.7	32.6	26.3	25.7
Drank more low-alcohol drinks	9.1	10.1	9.5	9.6
Stopped drinking	4.2	3.1	3.9	2.8
None of the above	58.1	49.1	54.8	51.8

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent drinkers.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Reasons for reduction

Respondents who undertook any of the alcohol reduction methods above (Table 5.7) were asked why they did so (Table 5.8):

- For all groups, the main reason nominated was for health reasons. Those drinking at risky or high-risk levels for harm in the long term were more likely than those drinking at low-risk levels to nominate health reasons. The opposite was true for those drinking at risk of harm in the short term.
- Lifestyle and social reasons were the next most commonly nominated reasons for alcohol reduction.

**Table 5.8: Reason for reduction in alcohol consumption, recent drinkers aged 14 years and over, by short- and long-term risk status, Australia, 2001**

Reason	Males		Females		Persons	
	Low risk	Risky or high risk	Low risk	Risky or high risk	Low risk	Risky or high risk
(per cent)						
<b>Short-term risk</b>						
Health reasons	27.5	25.3	30.6	25.7	29.0	25.5
Lifestyle reasons	15.0	22.5	12.0	17.4	13.6	20.2
Social reasons	19.6	18.1	15.9	18.0	17.9	18.0
Pregnant and/or breastfeeding	..	..	11.0	7.8	..	..
Prefer low-alcohol drinks, not to get drunk	10.6	5.5	7.6	4.5	9.2	5.1
Drink driving regulations	15.2	13.0	8.8	10.3	12.1	11.8
Financial reasons	6.6	10.9	5.8	10.2	6.2	10.6
Peer pressure	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.7
Other	4.7	4.1	7.7	5.3	6.1	4.6
<b>Long-term risk</b>						
Health reasons	26.2	28.3	27.7	32.4	26.9	30.4
Lifestyle reasons	19.0	15.5	15.0	11.3	17.2	13.3
Social reasons	19.0	18.3	16.6	18.6	17.9	18.4
Pregnant and/or breastfeeding	–	–	10.5	3.9	4.8	2.1
Prefer low-alcohol drinks, not to get drunk	8.6	5.3	6.5	4.5	7.6	4.9
Drink driving regulations	14.1	13.9	9.1	11.2	11.9	12.5
Financial reasons	8.1	12.7	7.3	10.7	7.7	11.6
Peer pressure	0.6	1.2	0.3	2.5	0.5	1.9
Other	4.3	4.9	6.9	4.8	5.5	4.9

Note: Base equals recent drinkers who had undertaken at least one measure to reduce their level of alcohol consumption in the last 12 months.

## Characteristics by alcohol risk status

In 2001, the characteristics of abstainers and those who consumed alcohol varied according to the level and pattern of alcohol consumption (Table 5.9):

- Those with post-school qualifications were more likely than those without to drink at risky or high-risk levels for both short-term and long-term alcohol-related harm.
- A higher proportion of unemployed persons consumed alcohol at risky/high-risk levels for harm in the short and long term than other employment status groups.
- Compared with those in urban areas, higher proportions of people from rural/remote areas drank at risky/high-risk levels for both short-term and long-term alcohol-related harm.
- Those whose main language spoken at home was English were more likely than those whose main language was not English to drink at risky/high-risk levels for both short-term and long-term alcohol-related harm.
- With regard to socioeconomic status, those who were the most socioeconomically advantaged were least likely to be abstainers.

**Table 5.9: Characteristics by short- and long-term risk status, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

Characteristic	Short-term risk			Long-term risk	
	Abstainer /ex-drinker	Low risk	Risky or high risk	Low risk	Risky or high risk
	(per cent)				
<b>Education</b>					
Without post-school qualification	21.7	45.8	32.5	68.6	9.7
With post-school qualification	13.1	49.8	37.1	76.9	10.0
<b>Labour force status</b>					
Currently employed	10.6	46.7	42.8	78.5	11.0
Student	26.4	29.7	43.8	64.0	9.6
Unemployed	14.2	41.2	44.6	68.0	17.8
Retired/pension/home duties	25.8	57.9	16.2	67.1	7.1
<b>Main language spoken at home</b>					
English	15.7	48.3	36.0	74.0	10.3
Other	40.8	44.9	14.3	55.9	3.3
<b>Socioeconomic status</b>					
1st quintile	21.1	47.1	31.9	68.9	10.0
2nd quintile	19.5	48.2	32.2	70.6	9.9
3rd quintile	17.2	47.3	35.5	72.9	9.9
4th quintile	16.2	47.4	36.3	73.6	10.2
5th quintile	13.6	49.6	36.8	77.2	9.2
<b>Geography</b>					
Urban	17.6	48.5	33.9	73.2	9.3
Rural/remote	17.4	46.8	35.8	71.3	11.3
<b>Marital status</b>					
Never married	18.2	30.8	51.0	67.6	14.2
Divorced/separated/widowed	23.0	53.9	23.1	67.1	9.9
Married/de facto	16.1	54.3	29.6	76.0	8.0
<b>Indigenous status</b>					
Indigenous	20.6	30.7	48.7	59.5	19.9
Non-Indigenous	17.3	48.4	34.3	73.0	9.7

# 6 Illicit drug use

## Introduction

This chapter presents data on use of any illicit drug. Illicit drugs include illegal drugs (such as marijuana/cannabis), prescription drugs (such as pain-killers, tranquillisers) when used for non-medical purposes, and other substances used inappropriately (such as inhalants). For a full list of drugs included in the survey questionnaire, see Glossary.

Two types of data are presented in this chapter: firstly data on the use of any illicit drug, and secondly data on the use of any illicit drug excluding marijuana/cannabis (the influence of marijuana/cannabis is removed due to its relatively high use compared with other illicit drugs).

The majority of recent users of illicit drugs (68.6%) had used only one kind of illicit drug in the last 12 months. When marijuana/cannabis is excluded, 58.4% of recent users had used only one kind of illicit drug in the last 12 months.

## Use of any illicit drug

### Use of any illicit drug

In 2001, almost 6 million (37.7%) Australians aged 14 years and over had used an illicit drug in their lifetime (Table 6.1):

- Males (41.3%) were more likely than females (34.2%) to have used an illicit drug in their lifetime.
- Approximately 2.7 million Australians had used an illicit drug in the last 12 months, with males (19.8%) more likely than females (14.2%) to have used in the last 12 months.
- Australians aged 20–29 years were more likely than those in the other age groups to have used an illicit drug in their lifetime and in the last 12 months.

**Table 6.1: Use of any illicit drug, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

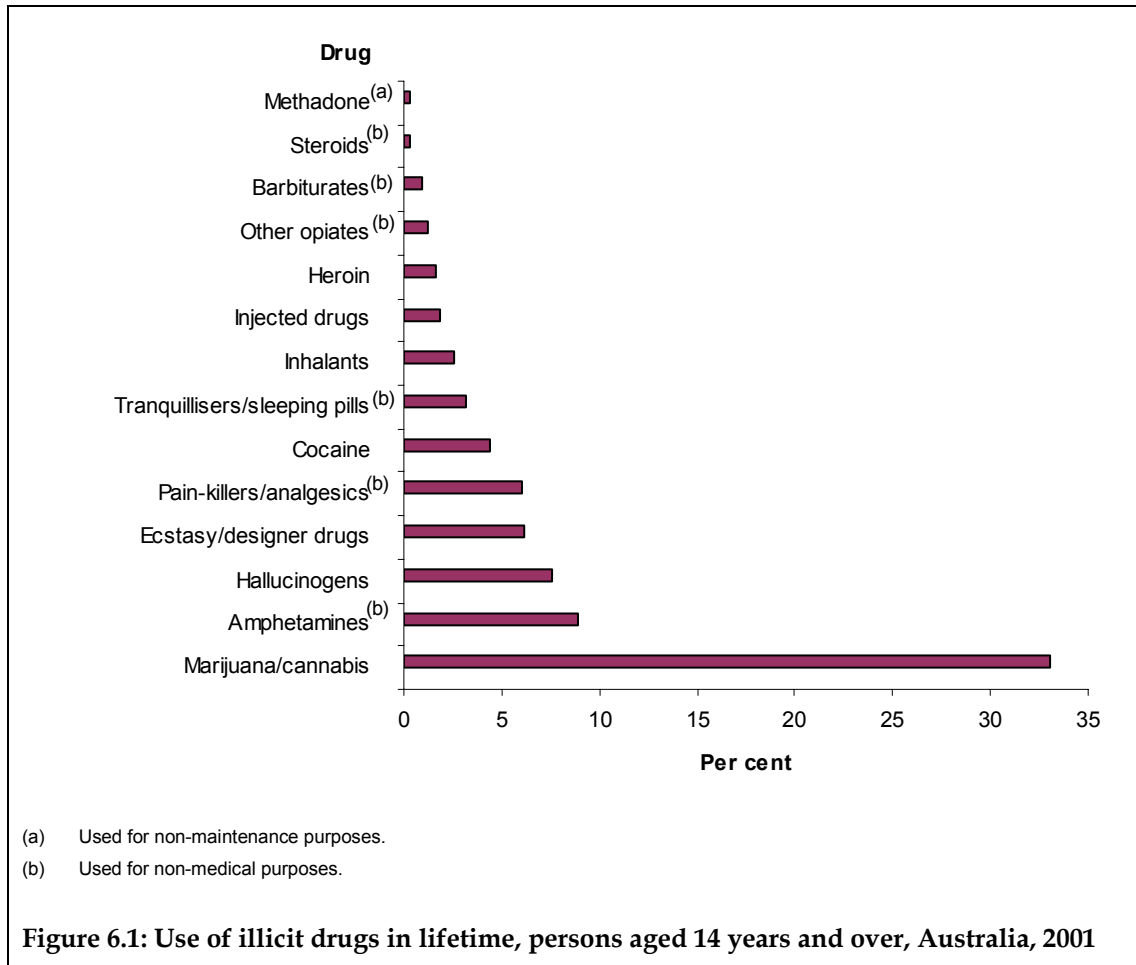
Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	37.7	62.6	53.4	23.9	41.3	34.2	37.7
In the last 12 months	27.7	35.5	20.3	7.5	19.8	14.2	16.9
	(number)						
In lifetime	612,400	1,775,400	1,569,400	1,949,400	3,211,700	2,717,600	5,930,400
In the last 12 months	450,900	1,007,500	595,300	618,500	1,536,800	1,125,800	2,663,600

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Type of illicit drugs used in lifetime

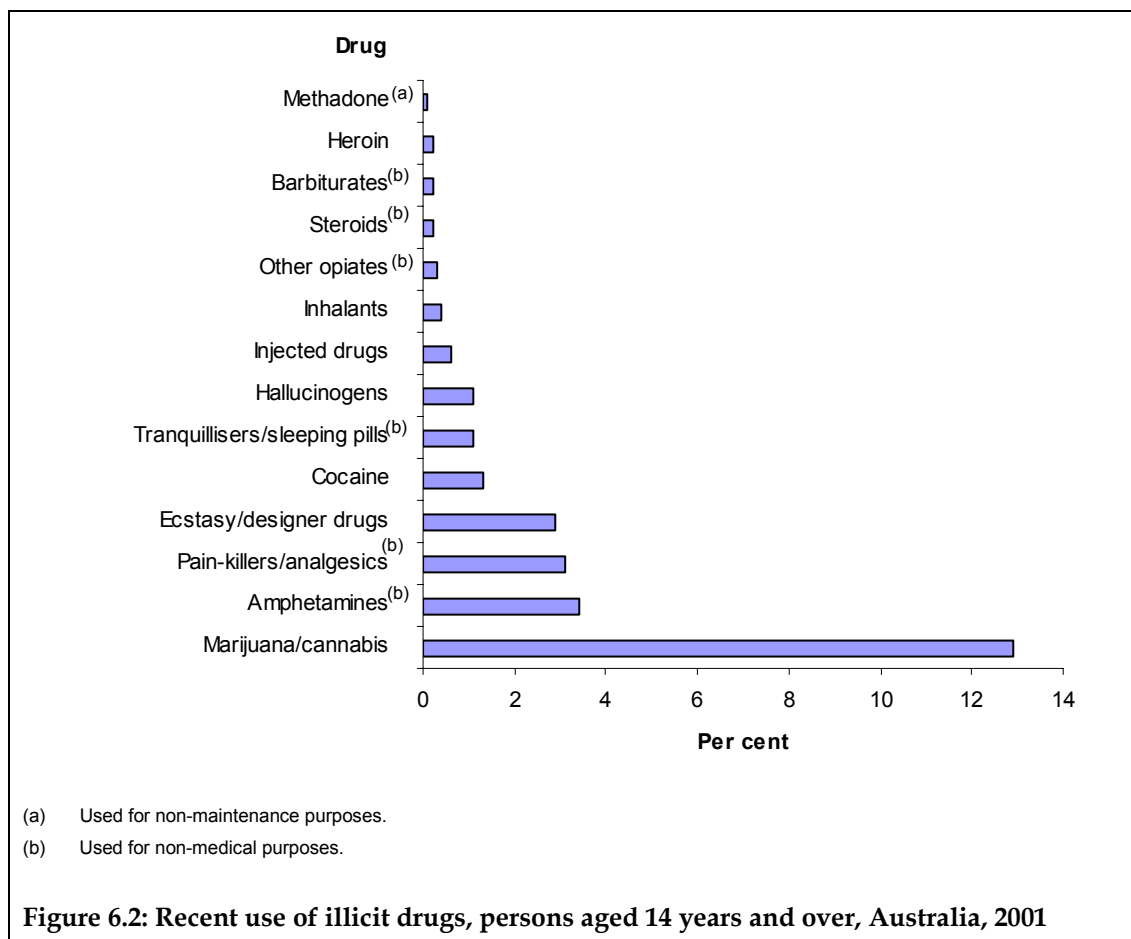
Around 38% of the population aged 14 years and over had used an illicit drug at least once in their lifetime.

Marijuana/cannabis was the most common illicit drug used, with one in three persons reporting that they had used at least once in their lifetime (Figure 6.1). The four next most commonly used illicit drugs were amphetamines (8.9%), hallucinogens (7.6%), ecstasy/designer drugs (6.1%), pain-killers/analgesics (for non-medical purposes) (6.0%).



## Type of illicit drugs used recently

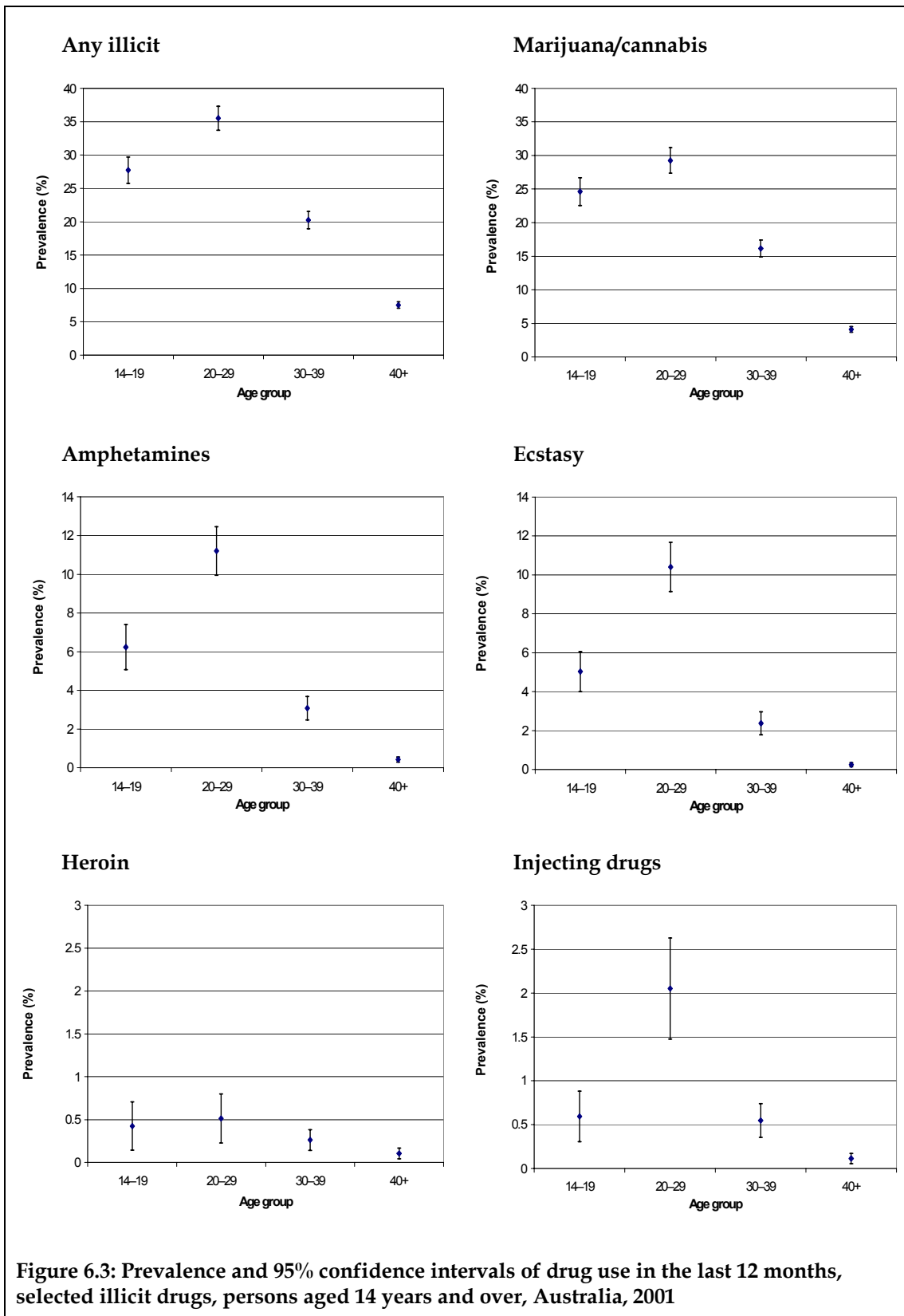
In 2001, the five illicit drugs most commonly used in the last 12 months, in order of descending prevalence, were marijuana/cannabis (12.9%), amphetamines (3.4%), pain-killers/analgesics for non-medical purposes (3.1%), ecstasy/designer drugs (2.9%) and cocaine (1.3%) (Figure 6.2).



## Recent illicit drug use by age group

Use of any illicit drug and use of the selected illicit drugs in the last 12 months was most prevalent among persons aged 20 to 29 years (Figure 6.3):

- After peaking in the 20–29 years age group, prevalence of illicit drug use declines with age.
- Teenagers (aged 14 to 19 years) were the age group next most common to have used illicit drugs in the last 12 months. Almost one in three (27.7%) teenagers had used an illicit drug in the past 12 months. Again, marijuana/cannabis was the drug most likely to have been used, one in four (24.6%) teenagers had used marijuana/cannabis in the past 12 months.



## Factors influencing first use of an illicit drug

Australians who had used an illicit drug in their lifetime were influenced by a range of factors when they first used (Table 6.2). Respondents were asked to indicate all factors that influenced their use:

- For those who had used illicit drugs in their lifetime, curiosity was the most common factor which influenced their decision to use for the first time (82.4%).
- For over half (54.7%) of Australians aged 14 years and over who had used an illicit drug in their lifetime, peer pressure influenced their decision to use for the first time.

**Table 6.2: Factors influencing first use of any illicit drug, lifetime users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Factor	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Peer pressure	54.8	54.5	54.7
Curiosity	81.9	83.0	82.4
To feel better	8.0	9.8	8.8
To take a risk	9.9	11.1	10.4
To do something exciting	21.6	22.9	22.2
Family, relationship, work or school problems	6.2	8.8	7.4
Traumatic experience	3.1	5.1	4.0
Other	2.2	4.1	3.0

### Notes

1. Base equals used an illicit drug in lifetime.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Characteristics—any illicit drug use

The survey enabled a profile on the characteristics of those who had never used any illicit drugs (62.3% of Australians aged 14 years and over), those who had used but not in the last 12 months (20.8%) and those who had used in the last 12 months (16.9%) (Table 6.3):

- A greater proportion of people without post-school qualifications had never used an illicit drug (66.2%) compared with those who had post-school qualifications (58.3%). The pattern was similar for recent use.
- A higher proportion of people who were most socioeconomically disadvantaged had never used illicit drugs, compared with the other socioeconomic groups.
- A greater proportion of people from urban areas (17.3%) had used illicit drugs in the last 12 months than those from rural or remote areas (16.1%).
- Unemployed people were more likely than those in the other employment status groups to have ever used or recently used illicit drugs.



**Table 6.3: Characteristics by illicit drug use status, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

Characteristics	Never use	Ever use	Recent use
	(per cent)		
<b>Education</b>			
Without post-school qualification	66.2	33.8	17.1
With post-school qualification	58.3	41.7	16.8
<b>Labour force status</b>			
Currently employed	54.4	45.6	18.3
Student	59.8	40.2	27.8
Unemployed	47.5	52.5	32.0
Retired/pension/home duties	79.0	21.0	8.5
<b>Main language spoken at home</b>			
English	61.0	39.0	17.4
Other	79.5	20.5	10.5
<b>Socioeconomic status</b>			
1st quintile	64.8	35.2	16.0
2nd quintile	63.5	36.5	16.3
3rd quintile	61.3	38.7	18.1
4th quintile	60.4	39.6	17.7
5th quintile	61.1	38.9	17.0
<b>Geography</b>			
Urban	61.9	38.1	17.3
Rural/remote	63.5	36.5	16.1
<b>Marital status</b>			
Never married	50.6	49.4	32.0
Divorced/separated/widowed	66.6	33.4	15.5
Married/de facto	66.5	33.5	10.7
<b>Indigenous status</b>			
Indigenous	42.9	57.1	31.8
Non-Indigenous	62.6	37.4	16.7

# Use of any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis

## Use of any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis

When marijuana is excluded from the use of illicit drugs, the number of Australians who had used an illicit drug in their lifetime drops from 5.9 million to 2.9 million (Table 6.4):

- Almost one in five (18.5%) Australians aged 14 years and over had used an illicit drug other than marijuana/cannabis in their lifetime.
- Approximately 1.3 million people (8.4%) had used an illicit drug other than marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months.
- When marijuana/cannabis is excluded, Australians aged 20–29 years were still the age group most likely to have used illicit drugs. One in five (20.0%) had used in the last 12 months.

**Table 6.4: Use of any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
				(per cent)			
In lifetime	16.7	36.1	23.7	11.2	20.4	16.5	18.5
In the last 12 months	11.8	20.0	8.6	4.0	9.4	7.4	8.4
				(number)			
In lifetime	255,900	1,099,300	683,400	927,600	1,591,800	1,310,900	2,902,700
In the last 12 months	181,300	611,000	249,000	328,200	733,600	589,800	1,323,400

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Characteristics—any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis

The 2001 survey collected information on the characteristics of users and non-users (81.5% of the population) of any illicit drugs except marijuana/cannabis (Table 6.5):

- A greater proportion of people whose main language spoken at home was not English had never used an illicit drug (85.9%), compared with those whose main language spoken at home was English (81.2%).
- A greater proportion of people from urban areas (9.0%) had used illicit drugs except marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months than those from rural or remote areas (6.8%).
- With regard to employment status, unemployed persons had the highest proportion who had used an illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months.

**Table 6.5: Characteristics by any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis use status, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Never use</b>	<b>Ever use</b>	<b>Recent use</b>
	<b>(per cent)</b>		
<b>Education</b>			
Without post-school qualification	83.2	16.8	8.5
With post-school qualification	80.1	19.9	8.2
<b>Labour force status</b>			
Currently employed	79.0	21.0	8.8
Student	79.6	20.4	12.4
Unemployed	68.9	31.1	17.2
Retired/pension/home duties	88.4	11.6	5.0
<b>Main language spoken at home</b>			
English	81.2	18.8	8.5
Other	85.9	14.1	7.4
<b>Socioeconomic status</b>			
1st quintile	82.7	17.3	7.2
2nd quintile	81.7	18.3	8.1
3rd quintile	80.6	19.4	9.2
4th quintile	80.6	19.4	9.1
5th quintile	81.9	18.1	8.7
<b>Geography</b>			
Urban	80.7	19.3	9.0
Rural/remote	83.7	16.3	6.8
<b>Marital status</b>			
Never married	72.6	27.4	16.8
Divorced/separated/widowed	82.5	17.5	7.3
Married/de facto	85.2	14.8	5.0
<b>Indigenous status</b>			
Indigenous	74.9	25.1	12.7
Non-Indigenous	81.7	18.3	8.3

## Non-users of illicit drugs

Australians aged 14 years and over who had never used an illicit drug in their lifetime were asked to indicate the factors that influenced their decision to never try:

- The most common response was 'just not interested'. Over half (52.3%) of those who had never used nominated this as one of their reasons for not trying illicit drugs (Table 6.6).
- Two in five (38.4%) nominated reasons related to health or addiction. The proportion of males and females nominating this was similar.
- 'Didn't like to feel out of control' was nominated by one in five (19.6%) of those who had never used an illicit drug.

**Table 6.6: Factors influencing the decision to never try an illicit drug, never users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Factor	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
For reasons related to health or addiction	37.5	39.2	38.4
For reasons related to the law	10.1	9.0	9.6
Pressure from family or friends	7.1	6.7	6.9
Did not want family/friends/employer or teachers to know	6.5	6.2	6.3
Didn't like to feel out of control	17.1	22.0	19.6
Didn't think it would be enjoyable	13.9	17.4	15.7
Financial reasons	7.1	7.1	7.1
Religious/moral reasons	13.0	17.0	15.0
Just not interested	48.2	56.3	52.3
Other	10.8	12.9	11.9

Note: Respondents could select more than one response.

Further information on non-users of alcohol, tobacco or illicit drugs can be found in Tables 4.5, 5.9, 6.3 and 6.5.

# 7 Marijuana/cannabis

## Introduction

In 2001, marijuana/cannabis was the most commonly used illicit drug in Australia: over 5 million Australians aged 14 years and over had used this drug in their lifetime.

The average age at which Australians first used marijuana/cannabis was 18.5 years.

## Use of marijuana/cannabis

About one-third (33.1%) of the population aged 14 years and over had used marijuana/cannabis in their lifetime (Table 7.1):

- Males (15.8%) were more likely than females (10.0%) to have used marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months.
- Approximately 1.2 million people aged 14 years and over had used marijuana/cannabis in the last month. A higher proportion of males (10.3%) than females (5.3%) had used in the last month.
- Almost 900,000 Australians aged 14 years and over had used marijuana/cannabis in the last week. Again, a higher proportion of males (7.6%) than females (3.7%) had used in the last week.

**Table 7.1: Marijuana/cannabis use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	34.3	58.9	49.8	18.6	36.9	29.4	33.1
In the last 12 months	24.6	29.3	16.1	4.1	15.8	10.0	12.9
In the last month	13.3	17.9	10.2	2.5	10.3	5.3	7.8
In the last week	9.1	12.4	8.2	1.8	7.6	3.7	5.6
	(number)						
In lifetime	557,600	1,670,300	1,463,900	1,523,700	2,870,900	2,338,800	5,205,600
In the last 12 months	400,300	829,600	474,700	335,500	1,232,800	797,500	2,029,500
In the last month	204,000	545,000	295,400	207,400	800,400	422,300	1,221,300
In the last week	139,200	377,400	236,600	151,200	593,600	291,900	884,300

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Frequency of use of marijuana/cannabis

The frequency at which the over 2 million recent users of marijuana/cannabis used this drug varied by age and sex (Table 7.2):

- Approximately one in six (16.0%) used marijuana/cannabis every day.
- Males (17.1%) were more likely than females (14.3%) to have used marijuana/cannabis every day.
- Australians aged 30–39 years were more likely than those in the other age groups to have used marijuana/cannabis every day.

**Table 7.2: Frequency of marijuana/cannabis use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
Every day	11.6	17.7	18.3	14.5	17.1	14.3	16.0
Once a week or more	19.1	21.1	27.0	24.9	26.2	17.3	22.7
About once a month	16.5	12.3	11.6	11.0	12.9	12.7	12.8
Every few months	24.5	20.5	14.3	19.3	18.8	20.9	19.6
Once or twice a year	28.3	28.4	28.8	30.4	24.9	34.8	28.8

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Form, quantity and method of use of marijuana/cannabis

Recent users of marijuana/cannabis were asked what form of marijuana/cannabis they used (Table 7.3) and, on average, how many cones, bongs or joints they normally had on a day they used this drug:

- Heads were the most common form of marijuana/cannabis used by both male and female recent users; however, a greater proportion of males (83.1%) compared with females (72.3%) used this form.
- Marijuana/cannabis leaf was the next most commonly used form of the drug, for both male (41.9%) and female (53.1%) recent users.

**Table 7.3: Form of marijuana/cannabis used, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Form of drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Leaf	41.9	53.1	46.3
Heads	83.1	72.3	78.9
Resin (including Hash)	17.4	13.5	15.9
Oil (including Hash Oil)	7.3	5.2	6.5
Skunk	27.3	17.9	23.7
Other	5.3	6.3	5.7

Notes

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

- Recent users of marijuana/cannabis most commonly used only one cone, bong or joint on a day this drug was used.
- The most common method of use of marijuana/cannabis among both male and female recent users was smoking as joints.

## Source of supply of marijuana/cannabis

Recent users of marijuana/cannabis were asked to indicate where they usually obtained this drug (Table 7.4):

- Marijuana/cannabis was usually obtained from friends or acquaintances (70.6%).
- One in seven (13.9%) recent users of marijuana/cannabis obtained this drug from a dealer.
- One in twenty (4.6%) recent users grew their marijuana/cannabis themselves.

**Table 7.4: Usual source for obtaining marijuana/cannabis, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Source	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Friend or acquaintance	70.4	70.9	70.6
Relative	3.7	9.4	6.0
Dealer	16.0	10.9	13.9
Grew it myself	5.2	3.5	4.6
Other	4.7	5.3	4.9

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## Usual place of use of marijuana/cannabis

Recent users of marijuana/cannabis were asked to indicate the locations they usually used marijuana/cannabis (Table 7.5):

- Recent users of marijuana/cannabis most commonly used this drug in their home or at a friend's house (87.4%).
- Private parties were the second most common location for both male (52.3%) and female (42.9%) recent users of marijuana/cannabis to use this drug.

**Table 7.5: Usual place of use of marijuana/cannabis, recent users aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

Location	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
In a home	86.2	89.2	87.4
At private parties	52.3	42.9	48.6
At raves/dance parties	12.4	7.2	10.3
At public establishments	10.7	6.1	8.9
At work or school/TAFE/university, etc.	7.7	3.7	6.1
In public places (e.g. parks)	20.2	13.9	17.7
In a car or other vehicle	23.8	15.5	20.5
Somewhere else	11.7	8.1	10.3

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Concurrent drug use with marijuana/cannabis

Recent users of marijuana/cannabis were asked if any other drugs were used (on at least one occasion) at the same time as this drug:

- Almost all (95.1%) had used alcohol at the same time as marijuana/cannabis (Table 7.6).
- One-quarter (26.0%) had used amphetamines at the same time as marijuana/cannabis.
- One in five (19.9%) had used ecstasy/designer drugs at the same time as marijuana/cannabis.
- Less than 3% had not used another drug at the same time as marijuana/cannabis.

**Table 7.6: Other drugs used with marijuana/cannabis, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Alcohol	95.9	93.6	95.1
Heroin	2.7	2.4	2.6
Cocaine/crack	9.0	5.8	7.8
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	5.1	4.5	4.9
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	3.3	6.1	4.4
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	6.7	6.3	6.6
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	1.5	0.7	1.2
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	28.5	22.0	26.0
Ecstasy/designer drugs	21.5	17.3	19.9
Other	4.2	3.1	3.8
None of the above	2.3	3.4	2.7

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Substitution of other drugs for marijuana/cannabis

Recent users of marijuana/cannabis were asked if they had used another drug when marijuana/cannabis was not available:

- Three-quarters (75.1%) of recent users reported substituting alcohol for marijuana/cannabis (Table 7.7).
- One in five (19.1%) male recent users of marijuana/cannabis and one in four (24.5%) female recent users did not use any other drug when marijuana/cannabis was not available.



**Table 7.7: Other drugs used to substitute for marijuana/cannabis when marijuana/cannabis not available, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

<b>Drug</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Persons</b>
		<b>(per cent)</b>	
Alcohol	77.6	70.8	75.1
Heroin	0.2 *	0.5	0.3
Cocaine	0.2 *	–	0.1 *
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	0.6	0.5	0.5
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	–	0.6	0.2 *
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	0.3 *	0.6	0.4
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	–	–	–
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	1.1	1.2	1.2
Ecstasy/designer drugs	0.5	0.5	0.5
Other	0.4	0.8	0.6
None	19.1	24.5	21.1

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

**Notes**

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## **Marijuana/cannabis use by friends and acquaintances**

All respondents were asked what proportion of their friends and acquaintances used marijuana/cannabis. The proportions varied depending on the use history of the respondent (Table 7.8):

- Among people who had never used marijuana/cannabis, 69.8% had no friends and acquaintances who used marijuana/cannabis, compared with 11.0% among those who had used in their lifetime.
- Of those who had used marijuana/cannabis in their lifetime, almost three-quarters (73.2%) reported that up to half of their friends and acquaintances used this drug.
- Among recent users, one-third (32.9%) reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances used this drug.

**Table 7.8: Marijuana/cannabis use by friends and acquaintances, persons aged 14 years and over, by use status, Australia, 2001**

<b>Proportion of friends</b>	<b>Use status</b>		
	<b>Never use</b>	<b>Ever use</b>	<b>Recent use</b>
		<b>(per cent)</b>	
All or most	0.9	15.8	32.9
About half or less	29.3	73.2	66.5
None	69.8	11.0	0.6

# 8 Prescription drugs (used for non-medical purposes)

## Introduction

In this section, prescription drugs used for non-medical purposes include: pain-killers/analgesics, tranquillisers, barbiturates and steroids.

In 2001, 3.8% (598,200) of Australians aged 14 years and over had used pain-killers, tranquillisers, barbiturates or steroids for non-medical purposes in the last 12 months; the majority of these people (85.4%) had only used one prescription drug for non-medical purposes.

The average age at which Australians first used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes ranged from 18.7 years for barbiturates to 22.8 years for tranquillisers.

## Use of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes

In 2001, almost 1.3 million Australians aged 14 years and over had used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes in their lifetime (Table 8.1). Other findings include:

- Whereas males (8.4%) were more likely than females (7.6%) to have used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes in their lifetime, equal proportions of males and females (3.8%) had used these drugs in the last 12 months.
- Australians aged 20–29 years were more likely than those in the other age groups to have used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes in their lifetime (12.7%) and in the past 12 months (5.9%).

**Table 8.1: Prescription drugs for non-medical purposes use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	7.3	12.7	9.1	6.2	8.4	7.6	8.0
In the last 12 months	4.4	5.9	3.8	3.0	3.8	3.8	3.8
	(number)						
In lifetime	112,600	386,700	262,600	517,600	654,000	603,200	1,257,200
In the last 12 months	67,700	181,300	108,600	249,800	300,100	298,100	598,200

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Recent use of selected prescription drugs for non-medical purposes

In the last 12 months the prescription drug used for non-medical purposes by Australians aged 14 years and over was most likely to be pain-killers/analgesics (Table 8.2):

- Recent use of pain-killers/analgesics for non-medical purposes was similar between males (3.0%) and females (3.1%).
- Recent use of pain-killers/analgesics and tranquillisers/sleeping pills peaked among persons aged 20–29 years.
- Recent steroid use was low and was similar across all age groups. Recent use of barbiturates was also low with no clear trend across age groups.

**Table 8.2: Recent use of selected prescription drugs, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Prescription drug	Age group				All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	
	(per cent)				
	<b>Males</b>				
Pain-killers/analgesics	2.3	4.2	3.1	2.7	3.0
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills	1.5	3.0	1.4	0.5	1.2
Steroids	0.2 *	0.2 *	0.2 *	0.2	0.2
Barbiturates	0.5	0.5	0.2 *	0.1	0.2
	<b>Females</b>				
Pain-killers/analgesics	4.7	4.6	3.0	2.4	3.1
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills	1.5	2.2	1.1	0.5	1.0
Steroids	0.2 *	0.1 *	0.1 *	0.1	0.1
Barbiturates	0.2 *	0.2 *	0.2	0.1	0.1
	<b>Persons</b>				
Pain-killers/analgesics	3.5	4.4	3.0	2.6	3.1
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills	1.5	2.6	1.2	0.5	1.1
Steroids	0.2 *	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
Barbiturates	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2

## Frequency of use of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes

The frequency at which the 598,200 recent users of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes used these drugs differed by sex and age (Table 8.3):

- One-quarter (25.5%) used one drug or more daily or weekly.
- When comparing all age groups, those aged 40 years and over had the highest proportion of recent users who used every day or every week.

**Table 8.3: Frequency of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
				(per cent)			
Daily or weekly	24.0	20.9	19.7	32.1	23.4	27.5	25.5
About once a month	28.0	18.2	24.9	23.6	21.6	24.3	23.0
Every few months	23.2	28.1	22.8	26.0	25.0	26.2	25.6
Once or twice a year	24.8	32.7	32.6	18.3	30.0	21.9	26.0

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Source of supply of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes

Recent users were asked to indicate where they usually obtained prescription drugs for non-medical purposes:

- People who had used pain-killers in the last 12 months were most likely to obtain them from a shop/retail outlet (67.7%).
- 'Friend or acquaintance' was the most commonly named source of supply for recent users of tranquillisers (44.4%). One in 10 recent users of tranquillisers obtained this drug from doctor shopping or forged scripts.
- Recent users of steroids most commonly obtained this drug at gyms, sporting clubs or fitness centres (32.1%).
- For those who had used barbiturates in the last 12 months, the most common source of supply was a friend or acquaintance (51.5%).

## **Usual place of use of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes**

Recent users were asked to indicate the locations they usually used prescription drugs for non-medical purposes:

- Recent users of pain-killers typically used them in their own home (94.4%). The next most common places of use were at a friend's house (11.7%) and in the workplace (11.3%).
- Similarly, recent users of tranquillisers were most likely to use them in their own home (86.3%) or at a friend's house (24.8%).
- At a friend's house was the most commonly cited location for use by recent users of steroids (17.1%).
- Two-thirds of recent users of barbiturates for non-medical purposes used at a friend's house (66.6%) or in their own home (64.3%).

## **Concurrent drug use with prescription drugs used for non-medical purposes**

Recent users of prescription drugs were asked if any other drugs were used (on at least one occasion) at the same time as prescription drugs:

- Alcohol and marijuana/cannabis were most commonly used at the same time as prescription drugs for non-medical purposes, by recent users.
- All recent users of pain-killers, barbiturates and steroids indicated that they had used at least one other drug at the same time. However, 16.4% of recent users of tranquillisers used this drug alone.

## **Substitution of other drugs for prescription drugs used for non-medical purposes**

Recent users of prescription drugs for non-medical purposes were asked if they had used another drug when prescription drugs were not available:

- Recent users of pain-killers for non-medical purposes most commonly used alcohol (49.5%), followed by marijuana/cannabis (31.8%) when pain-killers were not available. This pattern was also true for people who used tranquillisers or barbiturates in the last 12 months.
- When steroids were not available, recent users of steroids most commonly did not substitute another drug for steroids (73.3%).

# 9 Hallucinogens

## Introduction

The 2001 survey asked questions on the use of synthetic and natural hallucinogens (see Glossary for inclusions).

It was found that synthetic hallucinogens were more commonly used than natural hallucinogens. Greater proportions of Australians aged 14 years and over had used synthetic hallucinogens compared with natural hallucinogens, both in their lifetime (6.7% and 4.4% respectively) and in the last 12 months (0.9% and 0.5% respectively).

In this chapter, data are presented on the use of synthetic and natural hallucinogens combined.

The average age at which Australians first used hallucinogens was 19.1 years.

## Use of hallucinogens

In 2001, over 1 million Australians aged 14 years and over had used hallucinogens in their lifetime (Table 9.1):

- Approximately 1% (175,300) of the population had used hallucinogens in the past 12 months. Males (1.5%) were twice as likely as females (0.7%) to have used hallucinogens in the last 12 months.
- About 33,000 Australians aged 14 years and over had used hallucinogens in the last month. Two-thirds of those who had used in the last month were male (21,700) and one third (11,500) were female.
- Hallucinogens had been used in the last week by 6,900 people.
- Australians aged 20–29 years were more likely than those in the other age groups to have used hallucinogens.

**Table 9.1: Hallucinogens use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	4.2	17.8	11.0	3.7	9.3	5.9	7.6
In the last 12 months	2.4	4.0	1.0	0.1	1.5	0.7	1.1
In the last month	0.4	0.9	0.2	–	0.3	0.1	0.2
In the last week	0.1 *	0.2	–	–	0.1	–	–
	(number)						
In lifetime	64,800	541,400	317,500	308,200	723,100	466,300	1,188,900
In the last 12 months	36,400	120,500	28,000	4,700	117,400	58,200	175,300
In the last month	5,800	26,400	4,600	–	21,700	11,500	33,200
In the last week	1,900 *	5,700	–	–	4,500 *	–	–

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Frequency of use of hallucinogens

The frequency at which the 175,300 recent users of hallucinogens used this drug varied by age and sex (Table 9.2):

- Seven in 10 (69.6%) had used hallucinogens once or twice a year.
- None had used hallucinogens every day, and only 0.5% used hallucinogens once a week or more.

**Table 9.2: Frequency of hallucinogens use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
					(per cent)		
Three or more times a year	41.0	32.3	12.6 *	1.2 *	32.1	27.0	30.4
Once or twice a year	59.0	67.7	87.4	98.8	67.9	73.0	69.6

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Form and quantity of hallucinogens used

Recent users of hallucinogens were asked what form of the drug they used (Table 9.3) and, on average, how many 'trips' they normally had on a day they used this drug:

- The most common form of hallucinogens used by recent users was tabs (81.1%).
- Magic mushrooms were another common form of hallucinogens, used by over half (55.5%) of recent users.

**Table 9.3: Form of hallucinogens used, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Form of drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
LSD/tabs	81.4	80.5	81.1
LSD/liquid	11.6	6.7 *	10.0
Magic mushrooms	61.0	44.5	55.5
Datura/angel's trumpet	4.7	5.8 *	5.1

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

- On a day when hallucinogens were used, 96% of recent users had an average of two or fewer trips.

## Source of supply of hallucinogens

Recent users were asked to indicate where they usually obtained hallucinogens (Table 9.4):

- The most common way for recent users of hallucinogens to obtain this drug was from a friend or acquaintance (63.3%).
- Almost one in four (23.2%) recent users of hallucinogens usually obtained this drug from a dealer.

**Table 9.4: Usual source for obtaining hallucinogens, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Source	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Friend or acquaintance	59.6	70.6	63.3
Relative	2.3 *	1.7 *	2.1 *
Dealer	23.0	23.7	23.2
Other	15.1	4.0 *	11.3

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## Usual place of use of hallucinogens

Recent users were asked to indicate the locations they usually used hallucinogens (Table 9.5):

- At a friend's house or in own home was the most commonly nominated location for use by both male (74.4%) and female (60.2%) recent users of hallucinogens.
- Two in five recent users used hallucinogens at private parties (42.9%) and at raves/dance parties (41.8%).

**Table 9.5: Usual place of use of hallucinogens, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001.**

Location	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
In a home	74.4	60.2	69.7
At private parties	43.1	42.3	42.9
At raves/dance parties	42.5	40.4	41.8
At public establishments	25.2	32.8	27.7
At work or school/TAFE/university, etc.	2.2 *	2.3 *	2.2 *
In public places (e.g. parks)	31.8	22.5	28.8
In a car or other vehicle	11.0	8.1	10.1
Somewhere else	19.6	8.6	16.0

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.



## Concurrent drug use with hallucinogens

Recent users of hallucinogens were asked if they used any other drugs (on at least one occasion) at the same time as this drug (Table 9.6).

- About three-quarters (73.6%) of recent users of hallucinogens had used alcohol at the same time as hallucinogens.
- Recent users almost as commonly used marijuana/cannabis as alcohol at the same time as hallucinogens (72.3%).

**Table 9.6: Other drugs used with hallucinogens, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Alcohol	72.9	75.2	73.6
Marijuana/cannabis	75.9	64.0	72.3
Heroin	–	0.6 *	0.2
Cocaine	3.8 *	3.3 *	3.6
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	1.2 *	–	0.9
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	1.5 *	2.9 *	1.9
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	1.3 *	–	0.9
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	1.2 *	–	0.8
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	25.4	23.9	24.9
Ecstasy/designer drugs	29.4	14.0	24.7
Other	2.9 *	3.3 *	3.0
None of the above	3.9 *	1.9 *	3.3

(a) For non-medical purposes.

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Substitution of other drugs for hallucinogens

Recent users of hallucinogens were asked if they had used another drug when hallucinogens were not available (Table 9.7).

- Recent users of hallucinogens typically used marijuana/cannabis when hallucinogens were not available (30.7%).
- One-quarter (25.0%) of recent users of hallucinogens did not use another drug when hallucinogens were not available.

**Table 9.7: Other drugs used to substitute for hallucinogens when hallucinogens not available, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Alcohol	20.9	23.6	21.8
Marijuana/cannabis	35.8	20.8	30.7
Heroin	—	—	—
Cocaine	—	—	—
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	—	—	—
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	—	—	—
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	0.5 *	—	0.3 *
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	—	—	—
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	3.2 *	3.9 *	3.4
Ecstasy/designer drugs	18.2	16.4	17.6
Other	0.9 *	1.5 *	1.1 *
None	20.5	33.9	25.0

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.

2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## Hallucinogens use by friends and acquaintances

All respondents were asked what proportion of their friends and acquaintances used hallucinogens. The proportions varied depending on the use history of the respondent (Table 9.8):

- Almost all (92.8%) of those who had never used hallucinogens had no friends and acquaintances who used hallucinogens, compared with 38.9% among those who had used in their lifetime.
- Of those who had used hallucinogens in their lifetime, over half (58.1%) reported that about half or fewer of their friends and acquaintances used this drug.
- Among recent users, 12.1% reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances used this drug.

**Table 9.8: Hallucinogens use by friends and acquaintances, persons aged 14 years and over, by use status, Australia, 2001**

Proportion of friends	Use status		
	Never use	Ever use	Recent use
		(per cent)	
All or most	0.1	3.0	12.1
About half or less	7.0	58.1	83.1
None	92.8	38.9	4.7

# 10 Heroin, methadone and other opiates

## Introduction

This chapter presents data on use of heroin, methadone for non-maintenance purposes and other opiates such as morphine and pethidine for non-medical purposes. The survey's section on use of other opiates was not the same as for use of heroin and methadone, hence some of the tables presented below do not include other opiates.

About four in five recent users of opiates had used only one kind of opiate in the last 12 months.

The average age at which Australians first used heroin was 20.7 years and for methadone 21.8 years.

## Use of heroin, methadone and/or other opiates

In 2001, about 365,000 Australians aged 14 years and over had used heroin and/or methadone and/or other opiates in their lifetime (Table 10.1):

- Of those who had used these drugs in their lifetime, approximately two-thirds (241,000) were male and one-third female (124,200).
- Only 0.5% of the population had used these drugs in the last 12 months. The proportions for males (0.6%) and females (0.5%) were similar.
- Compared with other age groups, Australians aged 20–29 years were the group most likely to have used any of these drugs in their lifetime and in the last 12 months.

**Table 10.1: Heroin, methadone and/or other opiate use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	1.7	4.6	3.1	1.4	3.1	1.6	2.3
months	0.9	1.1	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.5	0.5
	(number)						
In lifetime	25,600	139,500	90,700	119,700	241,000	124,200	364,700
months	13,800	34,800	14,000	20,500	44,700	36,100	80,800

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Frequency of use of heroin, methadone and/or other opiates

The frequency at which the 80,800 recent users of heroin, methadone and/or other opiates used these drugs varied by age and sex (Table 10.2):

- Approximately two in five (39.0%) used any of these drugs every day or every week.
- Females (44.6%) were more likely than males (33.1%) to use any of these drugs every day or every week.

**Table 10.2: Frequency of heroin, methadone and/or other opiate use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, by age, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
				(per cent)			
Daily or weekly	34.7 *	32.7	47.9	67.3	33.1	44.6	39.0
Monthly	21.8 *	41.5	21.5 *	–	45.3	15.4	30.1
Once or twice a year	43.4	25.8	30.7 *	32.7	21.6	40.0	31.0

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Form and quantity of heroin, methadone and other opiates used

- Recent users of heroin are equally as likely to usually use heroin powder (69.6%) as heroin rock (70.5%).
- Methadone syrup (85.8%) was more likely to be used by recent users of methadone than physeptone tablets (36.2%).
- The most commonly used type of ‘other opiates’ used by recent users was morphine (58.7%).
- On a day heroin was used, the majority of recent users of heroin used one or two hits per day. This trend was the same for recent users of methadone.

## Method of use of heroin, methadone and other opiates

- The majority (86.7%) of recent users of heroin had injected this drug. Fewer than half (43.3%) of recent heroin users had smoked this drug. Heroin was snorted by 16.4% of recent users.
- Similarly, injection (78.0%) was the most common method of use by recent users of methadone.
- For other opiates, similar proportions of recent users had injected (47.7%) and had swallowed (46.5%) these drugs.

## Source of supply of heroin and methadone

Recent users were asked to indicate where they usually obtained heroin or methadone:

- Recent users of heroin were most likely to obtain this drug from a dealer, either on the street, at the dealer's house, at user's house or at another location (70.2%).
- Recent users of methadone for non-maintenance purposes were most likely to obtain this drug from a friend or acquaintance (79.6%).

## Usual place of use of heroin and methadone

Recent users were asked to indicate the locations they usually used heroin or methadone:

- Recent users of heroin were most likely to use this drug in their own home or at a friend's house (43.3%).
- Similarly, recent users of methadone were most likely to use this drug in their own home or at a friend's house (63.0%).

## Concurrent drug use with heroin, methadone and other opiates

Recent users of heroin, methadone and other opiates were asked if any other drugs were used (on at least one occasion) at the same time as these drugs:

- Two-thirds (67.4%) of recent users of heroin had used marijuana/cannabis at the same time as heroin.
- Nine in 10 (92.1%) recent users of methadone had not used another drug at the same time as methadone.
- Marijuana/cannabis was the drug most commonly used at the same time as other opiates by recent users of other opiates (64.2%).

## Substitution of other drugs for heroin and methadone

Recent users of heroin and methadone were asked if they had used another drug when their drug was not available:

- Recent users of heroin had most commonly used marijuana/cannabis when heroin was not available (56.6%).
- When methadone was not available, recent users had most commonly not substituted another drug for methadone (44.0%). However, about one in five (22.6%) substituted tranquillisers for methadone.

# 11 Amphetamines

## Introduction

In 2001, amphetamines were the second most commonly used illicit drug, following marijuana/cannabis.

The average age at which Australians first used amphetamines was 20.4 years.

## Use of amphetamines

About 1.4 million Australians aged 14 years and over had used amphetamines in their lifetime (Table 11.1):

- Males were more likely than females to have used amphetamines.
- About 224,000 people aged 14 years and over used amphetamines in the last month. A higher proportion of males (1.8%) than females (1.0%) had used in the last month.
- Those aged 20–29 years were more likely than those in the other age groups to have used amphetamines.

**Table 11.1: Amphetamine use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
				(per cent)			
In lifetime	8.4	22.0	13.5	3.2	10.6	7.3	8.9
In the last 12 months	6.2	11.2	3.1	0.4	4.2	2.7	3.4
In the last month	2.9	4.8	1.2	0.1	1.8	1.0	1.4
In the last week	1.2	1.8	0.3	0.1	0.7	0.5	0.6
				(number)			
In lifetime	13,700	624,600	396,600	268,300	828,200	57,800	1,405,800
In the last 12 months	101,400	317,800	90,600	36,000	323,100	211,200	534,200
In the last month	44,200	145,500	33,700	12,200	141,200	82,800	224,000
In the last week	18,900	56,100	9,200	7,600	50,800	36,600	87,400

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Frequency of use of amphetamines

The frequency at which the 534,200 recent users of amphetamines used this drug varied by age and sex (Table 11.2):

- Around one in eight (11.9%) used this drug daily or weekly. However, recent users most commonly used amphetamines once or twice a year (45.5%).
- About 43,000 recent users aged 20–29 years used amphetamines daily or weekly.

**Table 11.2: Frequency of amphetamines use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
Daily or weekly	10.7	13.6	7.3	13.5	11.9	11.8	11.9
About once a month	18.6	17.2	12.7	7.5 *	17.1	14.7	16.2
Every few months	26.3	28.5	23.8	14.0	26.9	25.7	26.4
Once or twice a year	44.4	40.7	56.2	65.0	44.1	47.8	45.5

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Form and quantity of amphetamines used

Recent users of amphetamines were asked what form of the drug they used, and, on average, how many points or grams they normally had on a day they used this drug (Table 11.3):

- The most common form of amphetamines used by recent users was amphetamine powder (83.6%).
- About one-third (37.7%) of recent users of amphetamines used crystal amphetamines.

**Table 11.3: Form of amphetamines used, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Form of drug	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Powder	83.5	83.8	83.6
Liquid	8.6	9.4	8.9
Crystal	41.7	31.5	37.7
Tablet	13.8	13.7	13.8
Prescription amphetamines	9.6	9.0	9.4

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.

2. Respondents could select more than one response.

- On a day they used amphetamines, recent users typically had 10 points (that is, 1.0 grams).

## Source of supply of amphetamines

Recent users of amphetamines were asked to indicate where they usually obtained this drug (Table 11.4):

- Recent users of amphetamines typically obtained this drug from a friend or acquaintance (70.9%).
- Almost one-quarter (23.3%) of recent users of amphetamines obtained this drug from a dealer.

**Table 11.4: Usual source for obtaining amphetamines, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Source	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Friend or acquaintance	69.9	72.5	70.9
Relative	2.1	4.0	2.9
Dealer	24.7	21.1	23.3
Other	3.3	2.3	2.9

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## Usual place of use of amphetamines

Recent users of amphetamines were asked to indicate where they usually used this drug (Table 11.5):

- Both male (55.4%) and female (65.0%) recent users were most likely to use amphetamines in their own home or at a friend's house, compared with all other locations.
- Private parties were the next most common location for use of amphetamines (47.4%).

**Table 11.5: Usual place of use of amphetamines, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Location	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
In a home	55.4	65.0	59.1
At private parties	49.5	44.2	47.4
At raves/dance parties	49.3	41.1	46.1
At public establishments	42.5	36.8	40.3
At work or school/TAFE/university, etc.	9.2	7.3	8.4
In public places (e.g. parks)	9.3	7.3	8.5
In a car or other vehicle	14.4	10.5	12.9
Somewhere else	6.5	6.9	6.7

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.



## Concurrent drug use with amphetamines

Recent users of amphetamines were asked if any other drugs were used (on at least one occasion) at the same time as this drug (Table 11.6):

- Alcohol was the drug most likely to be consumed (on at least one occasion) at the same time as amphetamines (87.7%) by recent users of amphetamines.
- Recent users next most commonly used marijuana/cannabis at the same time as amphetamines (71.5%).

**Table 11.6: Other drugs used with amphetamines, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females (per cent)	Persons
Alcohol	87.3	88.4	87.7
Marijuana/cannabis	75.0	65.6	71.5
Heroin	3.2	4.1	3.6
Cocaine	15.6	12.1	14.3
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	7.3	6.2	6.9
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	2.8	4.1	3.3
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	6.5	5.4	6.1
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	1.6	1.9	1.7
Ecstasy/designer drugs	43.4	43.2	43.3
Other	3.0	5.2	3.8
None of the above	0.8 *	1.4 *	1.0

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Substitution of other drugs for amphetamines

Recent users of amphetamines were asked if they had used another drug when amphetamines were not available (Table 11.7):

- About three in five (58.7%) recent users of amphetamines substituted alcohol for amphetamines when the latter were not available.
- Marijuana/cannabis was the second most common substitute for amphetamines (35.0%).

**Table 11.7: Other drugs used to substitute for amphetamines when amphetamines not available, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Alcohol	57.4	61.0	58.7
Marijuana/cannabis	38.8	28.4	35.0
Heroin	1.0 *	2.4 *	1.5 *
Cocaine	1.4 *	4.6 *	2.5
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	0.1 *	0.2 *	0.1 *
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	–	2.4 *	0.9 *
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	1.3 *	1.1 *	1.2 *
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	–	–	–
Ecstasy	–	–	–
Other	–	–	–
None	–	–	–

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

**Notes**

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## Amphetamines use by friends and acquaintances

All respondents were asked what proportion of their friends and acquaintances used amphetamines. The proportions varied with the respondent's history of use (Table 11.8):

- A high proportion (88.4%) of Australians aged 14 years and over who had never used amphetamines had no friends and acquaintances who used amphetamines. In comparison, among those who had used in their lifetime, 20.2% had no friends and acquaintances who used amphetamines.
- Three-quarters (73.6%) of those who had used amphetamines in their lifetime reported that about half or less of their friends and acquaintances used amphetamines.
- Among recent users, 13.3% reported that all or most of their friends and acquaintances used amphetamines.

**Table 11.8: Amphetamines use by friends and acquaintances, persons aged 14 years and over, by use status, Australia, 2001**

Proportion of friends	Use status		
	Never use	Ever use	Recent use
		(per cent)	
All or most	0.1	6.2	13.3
About half or less	11.4	73.6	84.4
None	88.4	20.2	2.3

# 12 Ecstasy/designer drugs

## Introduction

In 2001, almost 1 million (6.1%) Australians aged 14 years and over had used ecstasy/ designer drugs in their lifetime.

The average age at which Australians used ecstasy/ designer drugs for the first time was 21.9 years.

## Use of ecstasy/designer drugs

Overall findings of ecstasy/ designer drug use include:

- Almost half a million (2.9%) Australians aged 14 years and over had used ecstasy/ designer drugs in the last 12 months.
- Ecstasy/ designer drugs were used by 1.1% of the population in the last month, and by 0.5% of the population in the last week.
- Males were more likely than females to have used ecstasy/ designer drugs.

**Table 12.1: Ecstasy/designer drug use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	7.0	19.7	7.4	1.0	7.1	5.1	6.1
In the last 12 months	5.0	10.4	2.4	0.2	3.6	2.3	2.9
In the last month	2.1	4.2	0.7	–	1.5	0.7	1.1
In the last week	1.0	1.7	0.3	–	0.6	0.3	0.5
	(number)						
In lifetime	114,200	559,500	217,000	82,800	550,400	401,800	952,100
In the last 12 months	81,900	295,200	69,800	20,600	277,000	179,400	456,400
In the last month	32,300	127,400	19,600	3,000 *	115,600	55,700	171,300
In the last week	15,500	50,600	8,200	1,900 *	49,100	23,100	72,200

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Frequency of use of ecstasy/designer drugs

The frequency at which the 456,400 recent users of ecstasy/designer drugs used these drugs varied by age group and sex (Table 12.2):

- Approximately one in 16 (6.2%) used ecstasy/designer drugs every day or every week.
- Males tended to use more frequently than females.
- A higher proportion of those aged 14–19 years used ecstasy/designer drugs every day or every week compared with the other age groups.

**Table 12.2: Frequency of ecstasy/designer drugs use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
				(per cent)			
Daily or weekly	10.4	6.9	0.1 *	–	6.9	5.1	6.2
About once a month	20.7	20.3	16.2	4.3 *	20.2	17.2	19.0
Every few months	22.8	30.7	25.8	42.7	31.4	25.1	28.9
Once or twice a year	46.1	42.2	57.9	52.9	41.5	52.7	45.8

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Source of supply and quantity used of ecstasy/designer drugs

Recent users of ecstasy/designer drugs were asked to indicate where they usually obtained this drug (Table 12.3):

- Recent users of ecstasy/designer drugs most typically obtained these drugs from a friend or acquaintance (72.9%).
- The next most common source for ecstasy/designer drugs was from a dealer (22.9%).

**Table 12.3: Usual source for obtaining ecstasy/designer drugs, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Source	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Friend or acquaintance	71.3	75.5	72.9
Relative	1.9	3.8	2.6
Dealer	25.4	19.1	22.9
Other	1.5 *	1.6 *	1.5

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.

2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

- On a day they used ecstasy/designer drugs, over 90% of recent users normally had one or two pills.

## Usual place of use of ecstasy/designer drugs

Recent users of ecstasy/designer drugs were asked to indicate where they usually used this drug (Table 12.4):

- Recent users of ecstasy/designer drugs most commonly used these drugs at raves/dance parties (70.1%).
- Private parties were the second most common location for recent users of ecstasy/designer drugs to use these drugs (53.8%).

**Table 12.4: Usual place of use of ecstasy/designer drugs, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Location	Males	Females (per cent)	Persons
In a home	44.3	48.9	46.1
At private parties	57.4	48.3	53.8
At raves/dance parties	74.6	63.1	70.1
At public establishments	49.4	51.4	50.2
At work or school/TAFE/university, etc.	2.2	2.8	2.4
In public places (e.g. parks)	10.2	9.2	9.8
In a car or other vehicle	8.2	3.8	6.5
Somewhere else	3.5	6.2	4.6

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Concurrent drug use with ecstasy/designer drugs

Recent users of ecstasy/designer drugs were asked if any other drugs were used (on at least one occasion) at the same time as this drug (Table 12.5):

- Three-quarters (76.5%) had used alcohol at the same time as ecstasy/designer drugs.
- Two-thirds (66.2%) had used marijuana/cannabis at the same time as ecstasy/designer drugs.

**Table 12.5: Other drugs used with ecstasy/designer drugs, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females (per cent)	Persons
Alcohol	75.8	77.6	76.5
Marijuana/cannabis	70.6	59.4	66.2
Heroin	0.2 *	2.1	1.0 *
Cocaine/crack	24.1	16.2	21.0
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	8.9	5.9	7.7
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	2.1	2.5	2.3
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	4.2	3.5	3.9
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	1.7 *	0.7 *	1.3
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	52.6	49.8	51.5
Other	3.4	3.3	3.3
None of the above	5.9	6.2	6.1

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

**Notes**

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Substitution of other drugs for ecstasy/designer drugs

Recent users of ecstasy/ designer drugs were asked if they had used another drug when ecstasy/ designer drugs were not available (Table 12.6):

- When ecstasy/ designer drugs were not available, one-third (36.7%) of recent users substituted alcohol for ecstasy/ designer drugs.
- One-quarter (26.2%) of recent users substituted amphetamines for ecstasy/ designer drugs when the latter were not available.
- One in six (15.6%) recent users of ecstasy/ designer drugs did not use another drug when these drugs were not available.

**Table 12.6: Other drugs used to substitute for ecstasy/designer drugs when ecstasy/ designer drugs not available, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females (per cent)	Persons
Alcohol	37.0	36.2	36.7
Marijuana/cannabis	17.8	16.2	17.2
Heroin	0.1 *	0.2 *	0.1 *
Cocaine	2.6	2.5	2.6
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	0.2 *	–	0.1 *
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	0.3 *	0.9 *	0.6 *
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	0.5 *	–	0.3 *
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	0.1 *	–	0.1 *
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	28.1	23.2	26.2
Other	0.5 *	0.8 *	0.6 *
None	12.8	19.9	15.6

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

**Notes**

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## Ecstasy/designer drugs use by friends and acquaintances

All respondents were asked what proportion of their friends and acquaintances used ecstasy/designer drugs. The proportions varied with the respondent's history of use (Table 12.7):

- Among people who had never used ecstasy/designer drugs, 86.4% had no friends and acquaintances who had used ecstasy/designer drugs. In comparison, among those who had used in their lifetime, 8.6% had no friends and acquaintances who used ecstasy/designer drugs.
- Three-quarters (76.5%) of those who had used ecstasy/designer drugs in their lifetime reported that about half or less of their friends and acquaintances used ecstasy/designer drugs.
- Among recent users, 26.7% reported that all or most of their friends and acquaintances used ecstasy/designer drugs.

**Table 12.7: Ecstasy/designer drugs use by friends and acquaintances, persons aged 14 years and over, by user status, Australia, 2001**

Proportion of friends	Use status		
	Never use	Ever use (per cent)	Recent use
All or most	0.3	14.9	26.7
About half or less	13.4	76.5	72.9
None	86.4	8.6	0.4 *

# 13 Cocaine

## Introduction

Approximately 700,000 Australians aged 14 years and over had used cocaine in their lifetime.

The average age at which Australians used cocaine for the first time was 22.6 years.

## Use of cocaine

In 2001, about 207,000 (1.3%) Australians aged 14 years and over had used cocaine in the last 12 months (Table 13.1). Other aspects of overall use include:

- Males were more likely than females to have used in their lifetime, in the last 12 months and in the last month.
- When comparing age groups, use of cocaine was highest among Australians aged 20–29 years.

**Table 13.1: Cocaine use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	2.6	10.0	6.5	2.2	5.3	3.5	4.4
In the last 12 months	1.5	4.3	1.5	0.3	1.6	1.0	1.3
In the last month	0.3	1.3	0.5	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.4
In the last week	0.1 *	0.4	0.2	–	0.1	0.1	0.1
	(number)						
In lifetime	40,300	306,400	188,300	182,100	414,500	278,500	692,500
In the last 12 months	22,900	130,800	42,000	22,700	125,700	81,100	206,600
In the last month	4,500	41,000	13,200	6,300	38,800	22,200	60,900
In the last week	2,000 *	13,200	4,700	–	10,400	10,100	20,500

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.



## Frequency of use of cocaine

The frequency at which the 206,600 recent users of cocaine used this drug varied by age group and sex (Table 13.2):

- One in six (15.9%) used cocaine at least once a month and one in five (19.2%) used every few months.
- Females used cocaine more frequently than males.
- Compared with the other age groups, a higher proportion of recent users aged 20–29 years used cocaine at least once a month.

**Table 13.2: Frequency of cocaine use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Age group				Sex		
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	Persons
				(per cent)			
Daily, weekly, once a month	9.6 *	18.8	16.1	3.3 *	14.6	18.0	15.9
Every few months	28.5	15.1	23.0	24.8	19.4	18.8	19.2
Once or twice a year	62.0	66.1	60.8	71.9	66.0	63.2	64.9

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Form, quantity and method of use of cocaine

Recent users of cocaine were asked what form of cocaine they used. Recent users were also asked on average how many hits or lines they normally had on a day they used this drug, and how they had used it:

- Powdered cocaine was the form typically used by recent cocaine users.
- On a day they used cocaine, the majority of recent users of cocaine normally used an average of one or two hits or lines.
- The most common method of cocaine use was snorting.

## Source of supply of cocaine

Recent users of cocaine were asked where they usually obtained this drug (Table 13.3):

- Among recent users, cocaine was usually obtained from a friend or acquaintance (76.4%).
- One in five (20.2%) recent users of cocaine obtained this drug from a dealer.

**Table 13.3: Usual source for obtaining cocaine, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Source	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Friend or acquaintance	74.3	79.9	76.4
Relative	2.0 *	4.8	3.0
Dealer	23.8	14.4	20.2
Other	–	1.0 *	0.4 *

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## Usual place of use of cocaine

Recent users of cocaine were asked to indicate the locations they usually used cocaine (Table 13.4):

- About three in five (62.7%) recent users of cocaine nominated in their own home or at a friend's house as one of the locations they usually used this drug.
- Private parties were the second most common location for recent users of cocaine to use this drug (51.9%).

**Table 13.4: Usual place of use of cocaine, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Location	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
In a home	57.9	70.4	62.7
At private parties	49.1	56.2	51.9
At raves/dance parties	40.9	29.3	36.4
At public establishments	41.6	27.9	36.3
At work or school/TAFE/university, etc.	4.4	6.0	5.0
In public places (e.g. parks)	3.5 *	8.2	5.3
In a car or other vehicle	8.5	8.5	8.5
Somewhere else	4.4	3.9 *	4.2

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Concurrent drug use with cocaine

Recent users of cocaine were asked if any other drugs were used (on at least one occasion) at the same time as this drug (Table 13.5):

- Recent users of cocaine had most commonly used alcohol with cocaine on at least one occasion (85.7%).
- Just over half (53.8%) had used marijuana/cannabis at the same time as cocaine, on at least one occasion.

**Table 13.5: Other drugs used with cocaine, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Alcohol	88.4	81.4	85.7
Marijuana/cannabis	59.2	44.9	53.8
Heroin	3.4 *	6.0	4.4
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	6.8	7.4	7.0
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	2.8 *	4.6	3.4
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	4.1	5.9	4.8
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	1.3 *	2.3 *	1.7 *
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	37.7	31.0	35.1
Ecstasy/designer drugs	53.0	37.4	47.1
Other	1.7 *	2.8 *	2.1 *
None of the above	1.0 *	2.9 *	1.7 *

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Substitution of other drugs for cocaine

Recent users of cocaine were asked if they had used another drug when cocaine was not available (Table 13.6):

- When cocaine was not available 42.2% of recent users substituted alcohol for cocaine.
- About one-quarter (27.6%) of recent users of cocaine substituted amphetamines for cocaine when the latter drug was not available.
- Fewer than one in 10 (8.3%) did not use another drug when cocaine was not available.

**Table 13.6: Other drugs used to substitute for cocaine when cocaine not available, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Alcohol	45.6	36.1	42.2
Marijuana/cannabis	7.5	16.7	10.8
Heroin	1.6 *	3.4 *	2.2 *
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	0.3 *	0.7 *	0.5 *
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	–	–	–
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	1.8 *	–	1.2 *
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	–	–	–
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	27.9	27.0	27.6
Ecstasy	6.3	9.2	7.3
Other	–	–	–
None	9.0	7.0	8.3

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

**Notes**

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

## Cocaine use by friends and acquaintances

All respondents were asked what proportion of their friends and acquaintances used cocaine. The proportions varied with the respondent's history of use (Table 13.7):

- Typically, those who had never used cocaine had no friends and acquaintances who had used cocaine (94.0%). In comparison, among those who had used in their lifetime, 31.6% had no friends and acquaintances who used cocaine.
- Two-thirds (64.8%) of those who had used cocaine in their lifetime reported that up to half of their friends and acquaintances used cocaine.
- Among recent users, 10.5% reported that all or most of their friends and acquaintances used cocaine.

**Table 13.7: Cocaine use by friends and acquaintances, persons aged 14 years and over, by use status, Australia, 2001**

Proportion of friends	Use status		
	Never use	Ever use (per cent)	Recent use
All or most	–	3.6	10.5
About half or less	6.0	64.8	79.0
None	94.0	31.6	10.5

# 14 Inhalants

## Introduction

This chapter presents data on the use of volatile substances such as solvents, aerosols, glue and petrol used as inhalants.

The average age at which Australians used inhalants for the first time was 17.6 years, the youngest age compared with the other illicit drugs in the survey.

## Use of inhalants

In 2001, fewer than half a million (415,500) Australians aged 14 years and over had used inhalants in their lifetime (Table 14.1). Other aspects of overall use are:

- About 70,000 (0.4%) Australians aged 14 years and over had used inhalants in the last 12 months.
- Those in the 20–29 years age group were more likely than those in the other age groups to have used inhalants.
- Males were more likely than females to have used inhalants.

**Table 14.1: Inhalant use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Period	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	2.9	7.0	3.6	0.8	3.3	2.0	2.6
In the last 12 months	1.0	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.3	0.4
In the last month	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.2
In the last week	0.1 *	0.3	–	–	0.1	–	0.1
	(number)						
In lifetime	45,100	214,900	104,500	67,400	253,500	162,200	415,500
In the last 12 months	15,500	30,300	14,300	9,300	44,900	23,400	68,200
In the last month	6,600	10,300	3,800	5,000	20,000	5,500	25,500
In the last week	1,800 *	7,900	–	–	10,100	–	12,600

*Note:* Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Frequency of use of inhalants

The frequency at which the 68,200 recent users of inhalants used this drug varied by age group and sex (Table 14.2):

- Male recent users (50.8%) were more likely than female recent users (41.4%) to use inhalants three or more times a year.
- Inhalants were not used daily by recent users. About half (52.3%) of recent users used inhalants once or twice a year.

**Table 14.2: Frequency of inhalants use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
Three or more times a year	52.5	48.2	25.9 *	94.1	50.8	41.1	47.7
Once or twice a year	47.5	51.8	74.1	5.9 *	49.2	58.9	52.3
	(number)						
Three or more times a year	8,100	14,600	3,700 *	8,700	22,800	9,600	32,400
Once or twice a year	7,300	15,700	10,600	500 *	22,100	13,800	35,900

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Source of supply and quantity of inhalants used

Recent users of inhalants were asked to indicate where they usually obtained this drug (Table 14.3):

- Three in five (61.4%) recent users of inhalants usually obtained these substances from a friend or acquaintance.
- About one in five (18.6%) recent users bought inhalants from a shop.

**Table 14.3: Usual source for obtaining inhalants, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Source	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Friend or acquaintance	72.0	50.2	61.4
Relative	–	7.3 *	3.6 *
Dealer	–	1.5 *	0.7 *
Buy at shop	18.4	18.9 *	18.6
Other	9.6 *	22.1	15.7

**Notes**

1. Base equals recent users.

2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.

- On a day they used inhalants, recent users typically had on average only one hit.

## Usual place of use of inhalants

Recent users of inhalants were asked the locations they usually used inhalants (Table 14.4):

- Three-quarters (74.5%) of recent users of inhalants used in their own home or at a friend's house.
- One in five recent users of inhalants used at private parties (26.6%) and at raves/dance parties (26.0%).

**Table 14.4: Usual place of use of inhalants, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Location	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
In a home	71.4	82.9	74.5
At private parties	29.3	19.1	26.6
At raves/dance parties	26.4	25.0	26.0
At public establishments	12.5 *	6.4 *	10.9
At work or school/TAFE/university, etc.	9.3 *	19.7	12.1
In public places (e.g. parks)	9.9 *	7.9 *	9.4
In a car or other vehicle	4.1 *	11.1 *	5.9 *
Somewhere else	4.5 *	1.0 *	3.6 *

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Concurrent drug use with inhalants

Recent users of inhalants were asked if any other drugs were used (on at least one occasion) at the same time as inhalants (Table 14.5):

- Recent users of inhalants had most commonly used alcohol at the same time as inhalants (45.5%).
- Two in five (40.5%) recent users had used marijuana/cannabis at the same time as inhalants.
- One-third (36.4%) of recent users of inhalants had not used another drug at the same time as inhalants.

**Table 14.5: Other drugs used with inhalants, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Alcohol	51.6	32.5	45.5
Marijuana/cannabis	44.5	32.0	40.5
Heroin	–	–	–
Cocaine	11.9	3.0 *	9.0
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	7.1 *	–	4.8 *
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	4.1 *	1.1 *	3.1 *
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	0.8 *	0.9 *	0.8 *
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	1.6 *	–	1.1 *
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	30.1	21.0	27.2
Ecstasy/designer drugs	33.5	13.8 *	27.1
Other	1.0 *	7.7 *	3.1 *
None of the above	33.8	41.8	36.4

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Substitution of other drugs for inhalants

Recent users of inhalants were asked if they used another drug when inhalants were not available (Table 14.6):

- When inhalants were not available, 20.3% of recent users substituted alcohol for inhalants.
- More than half (56.6%) of recent users did not use another drug when inhalants were not available.

**Table 14.6: Other drugs used to substitute for inhalants when inhalants not available, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Alcohol	19.2	22.5	20.3
Marijuana/cannabis	15.0	10.0	13.3
Heroin	0.4 *	–	0.3 *
Cocaine	–	–	–
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills <sup>(a)</sup>	–	–	–
Anti-depressants <sup>(a)</sup>	–	–	–
Pain-killers/analgesics <sup>(a)</sup>	–	–	–
Barbiturates <sup>(a)</sup>	–	–	–
Amphetamines/speed <sup>(a)</sup>	2.9	7.8 *	4.6
Ecstasy/designer drugs	6.0	0.9 *	4.3
Other	–	1.7 *	0.6 *
None	56.4	57.1	56.6

(a) Used for non-medical purposes.

*Notes*

1. Base equals recent users.
2. Respondents were asked to select one response only.



## Inhalants use by friends and acquaintances

All respondents were asked what proportion of their friends and acquaintances used inhalants. The proportions varied with the respondent's history of use (Table 14.7):

- Among people who had never used inhalants, 97.9% had no friends and acquaintances who had used inhalants, compared with 64.7% among those who had used in their lifetime.
- One-third (34.4%) of those who had used inhalants in their lifetime reported that up to half of their friends and acquaintances used inhalants.
- Among recent users, 4.9%\* reported that all or most of their friends and acquaintances used inhalants.

**Table 14.7: Inhalants use by friends and acquaintances, persons aged 14 years and over, by use status, Australia, 2001**

Proportion of friends	Use status		
	Never use	Ever use (per cent)	Recent use
All or most	0.1	0.9 *	4.9 *
About half or less	2.1	34.4	69.2
None	97.9	64.7	25.9

# 15 Injecting drugs (used for non-medical purposes)

## Introduction

This chapter presents data on the use of injectable drugs that are not medically prescribed to inject. Some examples of injectable drugs are steroids, speed, heroin, pethidine, cocaine and ecstasy.

The average age at which users first injected illicit drugs was 20.2 years.

## Lifetime and recent injecting drug use

In 2001, almost 300,000 (1.8%) Australians aged 14 years and over had injected illicit drugs in their lifetime. Other overall findings include:

- Fewer than one in 100 (0.6%) Australians aged 14 years and over had injected illicit drugs in the last 12 months.
- People aged 20–29 years were more likely than those in the other age groups to have injected illicit drugs.
- Males were more likely than females to have ever injected and to have injected in the last 12 months.

**Table 15.1: Injecting drug use, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
In lifetime	1.4	4.4	2.9	0.8	2.4	1.3	1.8
In the last 12 months	0.6	2.1	0.5	0.1	0.8	0.4	0.6
	(number)						
In lifetime	22,200	123,900	84,200	64,200	183,300	107,200	290,600
In the last 12 months	9,700	58,200	16,100	9,500	58,600	32,400	91,000

Note: Totals may not equal sum due to rounding.

## Frequency of injecting drug use

The frequency at which the 91,000 recent illicit drug injectors injected themselves varied by sex (Table 15.2):

- Two-thirds (66.2%) of recent illicit drug injectors did so at least once a week. Female injecting drug users (72.3%) were more likely than males (62.7%) to inject at least once a week.
- One in six (15.7%) recent illicit drug injectors did so daily; females (20.0%) were more likely than males (13.1%) to inject daily.

**Table 15.2: Frequency of injecting drug use, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Daily	13.1	20.0	15.7
More than once a week	24.2	7.8	18.1
At least once a week	62.7	72.3	66.2

Note: Base equals recent users.

## Source of supply and re-use of needles and syringes

Recent illicit drug injectors were asked where they usually obtained needles and syringes (Table 15.3):

- Recent users most typically obtained needles and syringes from a chemist (79.3%).
- The next most common source was a needle and syringe program (49.0%).

**Table 15.3: Usual source for obtaining needles and syringes, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Source	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Chemist	77.1	83.2	79.3
Needle and syringe program	48.4	50.0	49.0
Friends	29.4	26.6	28.4
Hospital or doctor	14.7	16.0	15.1
Other	5.6 *	8.6 *	6.7

### Notes

1. Base equals recent users.

2. Respondents could select more than one response.

- Of recent injecting drug users, 63.0% had never used a needle or other injecting equipment after someone else had already used it.
- Three in five (58.9%) recent injecting drug users reported that no-one else had ever used a needle or other injecting equipment after they had used it.

# 16 Drug-related incidents and potential harm

## Introduction

An objective of the National Drug Strategy is to minimise the harmful effects on the population of both licit and illicit drugs. The NDSHS contributes to this by exploring and reporting on the experiences of drug-related incidents and harm for Australians.

This chapter presents data on persons aged 14 years and over who were victims of drug-related incidents, where drug-related incidents occurred and what the outcomes were. Also presented are data on the perpetrators of drug-related incidents and persons who, while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, put themselves or others at risk of harm.

## Drug-related incidents

### Victims of drug-related incidents

Respondents were asked if they had been verbally or physically abused, or put in fear, in the past 12 months, by persons affected by either alcohol or illicit drugs. It was found that Australians aged 14 years and over were more likely to have been abused by someone affected by alcohol than someone affected by illicit drugs (Table 16.1). Other results include:

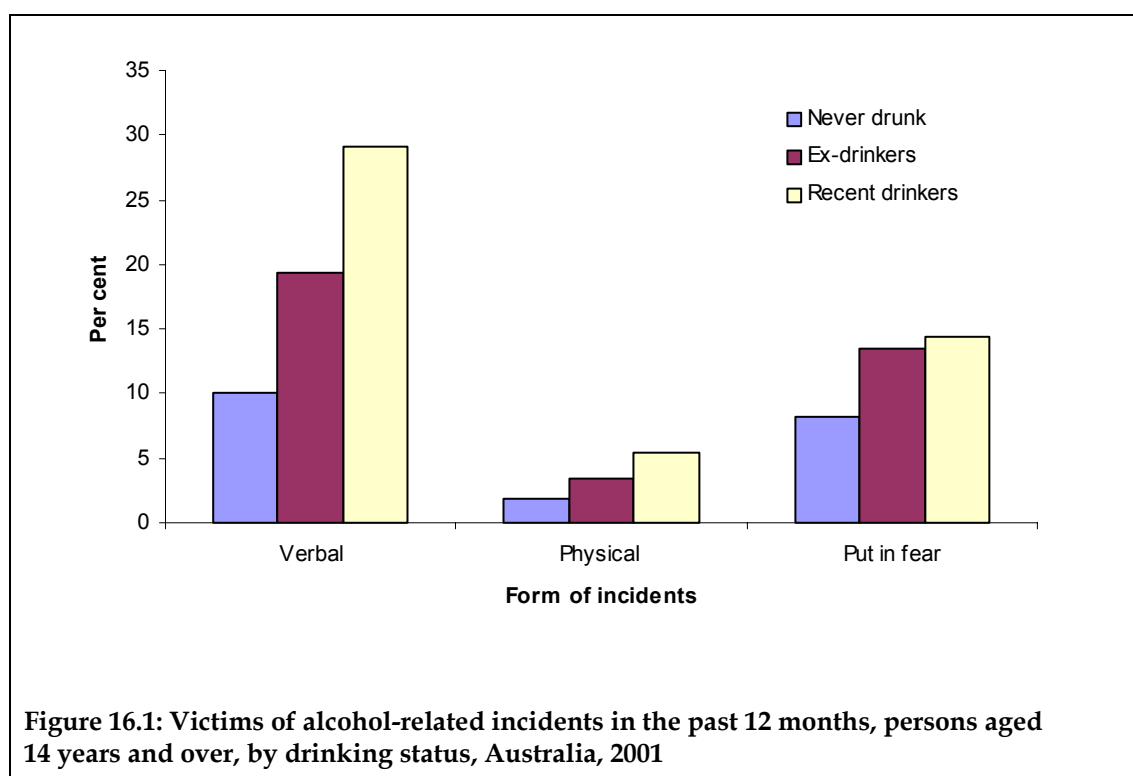
- Almost 5 million Australians aged 14 years and over (30.6%) had been abused by someone affected by alcohol. In comparison, over 2.3 million (15.1%) Australians aged 14 years and over had experienced illicit drug-related abuse.
- One in four (26.5%) persons were verbally abused by someone affected by alcohol and 11.3% were verbally abused by someone affected by illicit drugs.
- Physical abuse by someone affected by alcohol was experienced by one in 20 (4.9%) Australians. There was a greater proportion of male victims (5.8%) than female victims (3.9%).
- Although males were more likely than females to have experienced verbal or physical abuse in the past 12 months, a greater proportion of females was put in fear. For alcohol and illicit drug-related abuse respectively, one in six (15.6%) and one in 10 (9.6%) females were put in fear.
- Australians aged 20–29 years were the age group most likely to have experienced both alcohol and illicit drug-related abuse, reported by 47.7% and 21.1% respectively, in this age group.

**Table 16.1: Victims of drug-related incidents in the past 12 months, persons aged 14 years and over, by age, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Influence and incident	Age group				Sex		Persons
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	Males	Females	
	(per cent)						
<b>Alcohol</b>							
Verbal abuse	32.3	41.9	31.7	18.3	29.2	23.8	26.5
Physical abuse	10.4	9.5	5.3	1.9	5.8	3.9	4.9
Put in fear	19.3	22.0	16.4	8.8	11.8	15.6	13.7
<b>Any abuse</b>	<b>39.3</b>	<b>47.7</b>	<b>35.9</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>30.6</b>
<b>Illicit drugs</b>							
Verbal abuse	12.6	16.1	13.1	8.8	12.8	9.9	11.3
Physical abuse	3.5	3.7	2.6	1.2	2.6	1.8	2.2
Put in fear	11.1	12.1	9.5	6.8	7.8	9.6	8.7
<b>Any abuse</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>15.1</b>

In 2001, patterns of alcohol-related incidents were different for recent users of alcohol, ex-drinkers and those who had never drunk. Recent drinkers were significantly more likely, compared to both ex-drinkers and those who had never drunk, to have experienced both verbal and physical abuse by someone affected by alcohol (Figure 16.1). It was also found that in the past 12 months:

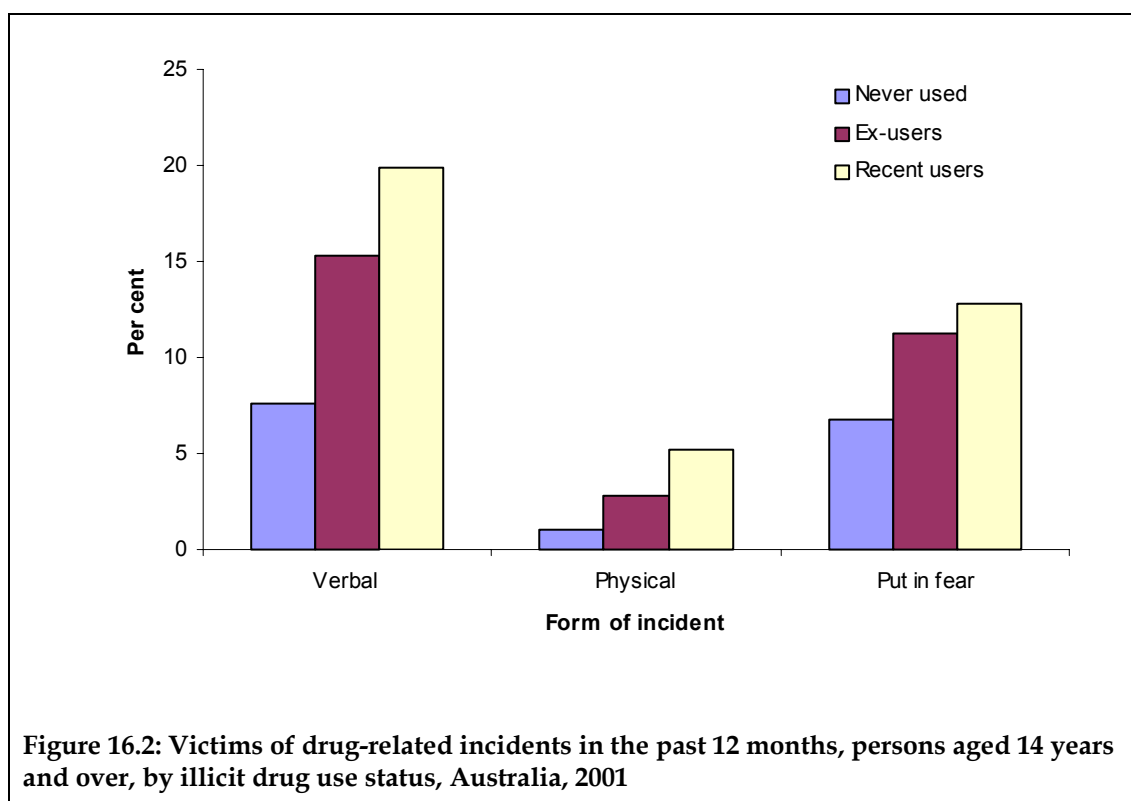
- among recent drinkers, 5.3% reported being victims of physical abuse and 14.4% were put in fear by someone affected by alcohol; and
- those who had never consumed alcohol were the group least likely to have experienced any of the incidents in the past 12 months: one in 10 (10.1%) reported being verbally abused, whilst 1.9% had been physically abused.



**Figure 16.1: Victims of alcohol-related incidents in the past 12 months, persons aged 14 years and over, by drinking status, Australia, 2001**

Consistent with the pattern of alcohol-related abuse, recent users of illicit drugs were typically more likely to have experienced each of the three incidents compared to those who had not used recently and those who had never used (Figure 16.2). The survey also found that in the past 12 months:

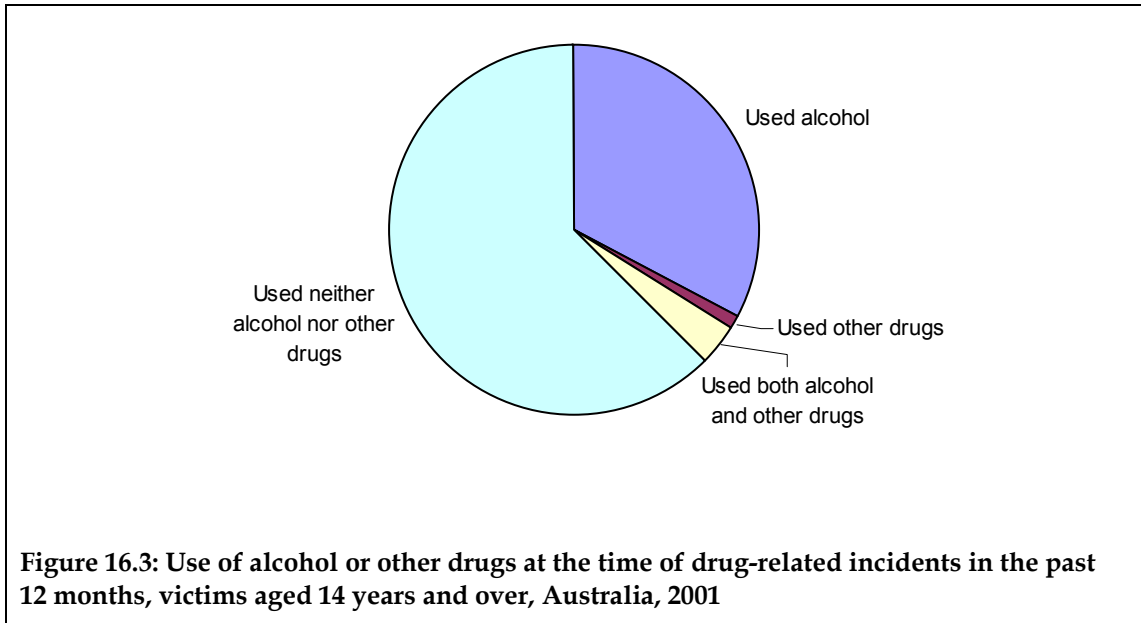
- one in five (19.9%) recent users had been verbally abused by someone affected by illicit drugs;
- illicit drug-related physical abuse was experienced by 5.2% of recent users. This was five times the proportion of never users (1.1%) who reported experiencing physical abuse; and
- 6.8% of those who had never used illicit drugs were put in fear, compared with 12.7% and 11.3% of recent and ex-users respectively.



## Use of alcohol or other drugs by victims

Those who reported being victims of drug-related incidents in the past 12 months were asked whether at the time of the incident(s) they had been drinking alcohol or using drugs other than alcohol. Almost two-thirds (62.4%) of those who were abused in the past 12 months reported not being affected by alcohol or other drugs at the time of the incident (Figure 16.3). Other results include:

- A third (32.7%) had drunk alcohol at the time of the abuse.
- A further 1.1% had consumed drugs other than alcohol and 3.7% were affected by both alcohol and other drugs.



- A greater proportion of female victims (70.2%) than male victims (55.0%) reported not drinking alcohol or using other drugs at the time of the incident.
- Four in 10 (39.5%) males who had been abused reported drinking alcohol when the abuse occurred. This contrasts with one-quarter (25.6%) of females.

### Reporting of drug-related incidents to police

Respondents who had sustained physical injury as a result of alcohol or drug-related incidents were asked if the incidents were reported to the police. In 2001, almost three quarters (72.3%) of the abuse resulting in physical injury was not reported to the police:

- Of those who did not report all incidents of physical abuse to the police, the most common reason, selected by 52.5%, was the perceived trivial or unimportant nature of the incident.
- The next most common response was that the incident was a private matter (29.3%).
- One in five of those who did not report all incidents of physical abuse felt that the police could not do anything (21.8%) or thought that the police would not do anything (19.5%).

## Relationship of perpetrator to victim

Those who experienced drug-related incidents in the past 12 months were asked to indicate who was responsible for the incidents. Most commonly, the abuse was by someone not known to the victim (Table 16.2):

- Abuse by someone not known to the victim was reported in over half of the verbal (54.7%) and put in fear incidents (62.0%).
- Across all three incident categories, males were more likely than females to have been abused by someone they did not know.
- Among female victims, current or ex-spouses or partners were responsible for a third (32.5%) and almost half (43.5%) of the verbal and physical abuse respectively.
- Females were seven times more likely than males to be put in fear by a current or ex-spouse or partner (22.3% compared with 3.1%).

**Table 16.2: Relationship of perpetrators to victims of drug-related incidents, victims aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Incident and relationship of perpetrator	Sex		Persons
	Males	Females	
	(per cent)		
<b>Verbal abuse</b>			
Current or ex-spouse or partner	8.6	32.5	19.6
Relative	8.9	18.4	13.2
Friend	12.5	12.2	12.4
Other person known to me	28.1	21.8	25.2
Someone not known to me	65.3	42.2	54.7
<b>Physical abuse</b>			
Current or ex-spouse or partner	5.7	43.5	21.3
Relative	10.5	15.5	12.6
Friend	11.6	9.1	10.6
Other person known to me	32.8	22.1	28.4
Someone not known to me	57.9	27.6	45.4
<b>Put in fear</b>			
Current or ex-spouse or partner	3.1	22.3	14.2
Relative	7.5	14.9	11.8
Friend	5.0	8.2	6.8
Other person known to me	25.8	21.5	23.3
Someone not known to me	73.4	53.6	62.0

### Notes

1. Base is those who reported being a victim of drug-related incidents in the past 12 months.
2. Respondents were able to select more than one response.



## Location of drug-related incidents

Those who reported being victims of drug-related incidents in the past 12 months were asked where the incidents had occurred (Table 16.3):

- The most common location of verbal abuse was in the street: for 45.5% of males and 31.4% of females who experienced verbal abuse, the abuse occurred in the street.
- The most common location for physical abuse was also in the street. However, almost twice the proportion of males (37.4%) than females (19.7%) experienced their physical abuse in the street.
- Furthermore, for those who were physically abused, a much greater proportion of females (48.6%) than males (15.0%) were abused in their own home.

**Table 16.3: Location of drug-related incidents, victims aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Incident and location	Sex		Persons
	Males	Females	
	(per cent)		
<b>Verbal abuse</b>			
In own home	14.6	38.6	25.6
In a pub or club	36.3	23.1	30.2
At own workplace	10.6	11.2	10.9
Public transport	9.6	7.3	8.5
In the street	45.5	31.4	39.0
Somewhere else	16.9	21.7	19.1
<b>Physical abuse</b>			
In own home	15.0	48.6	29.1
In a pub or club	34.9	15.1	26.6
At own workplace	13.8	8.3	11.5
Public transport	6.4	3.3	5.1
In the street	37.4	19.7	30.0
Somewhere else	18.7	27.5	22.4
<b>Put in fear</b>			
In own home	9.8	28.9	20.8
In a pub or club	23.7	17.5	20.1
At own workplace	10.9	9.8	10.3
Public transport	16.3	12.8	14.3
In the street	54.9	42.3	47.7
Somewhere else	16.8	22.4	20.0

*Notes*

1. Base is those who reported being a victim of drug-related incidents in the past 12 months.
2. Respondents were able to select more than one response.

## Potential for drug-related harm

Survey respondents were asked if they had undertaken any of a selection of activities in the past 12 months while under the influence of either alcohol or illegal drugs. Post-survey focus groups found that interpretations of the term 'under the influence' varied. Focus group participants related 'under the influence' to concepts ranging from 'having some alcohol in their system' to 'their judgement being affected'.

### Harm related to alcohol

Driving a vehicle was the most common response by recent drinkers aged 14 years and over when asked of activities undertaken while under the influence of alcohol (Table 16.4). The survey also found that:

- more than 2 million Australians aged 14 years and over had driven a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. Almost one in five male recent drinkers (17.9%) and one in 13 (7.8%) female recent drinkers had driven a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol; and
- the next most common activity to have been undertaken while under the influence of alcohol was verbal abuse of someone (8.1% of male recent drinkers and 4.0% of female recent drinkers).

**Table 16.4: Activities undertaken in the past 12 months while under the influence of alcohol, recent drinkers aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Activity	Sex		Persons
	Males	Females	
	(per cent)		
Went to work	7.6	2.9	5.4
Went swimming	8.4	3.9	6.2
Operated a boat or hazardous machinery	3.2	0.3	1.8
Drove a vehicle	20.9	10.0	15.6
Created a disturbance, damage or stole goods	6.1	2.8	4.5
Verbally abused someone	9.5	5.1	7.4
Physically abused someone	2.0	0.7	1.4
	(number)		
Went to work	508,600	181,900	690,500
Went swimming	562,100	244,600	806,700
Operated a boat or hazardous machinery	214,100	18,800	232,900
Drove a vehicle	1,398,500	627,200	2,025,700
Created a disturbance, damage or stole goods	408,200	175,600	583,800
Verbally abused someone	635,700	319,800	955,500
Physically abused someone	133,800	43,900	177,700

Note: Base equals recent drinkers.

## Harm related to illicit drugs

Respondents were also asked what activities they had undertaken while under the influence of illegal drugs. As with alcohol, the activity most commonly undertaken was driving a vehicle (Table 16.5). The survey also showed that in the past 12 months:

- a greater proportion of males (30.6%) than females (16.8%) drove a vehicle while under the influence of illicit drugs; and
- the two next most common activities undertaken while under the influence of illegal drugs were going to work and swimming.

**Table 16.5: Activities undertaken in the past 12 months while under the influence of illicit drugs, recent users aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Activity	Sex		Persons
	Males	Females	
	(per cent)		
Went to work	18.4	10.5	15.1
Went swimming	19.4	9.8	15.3
Operated a boat or hazardous machinery	7.5	0.6	4.6
Drove a vehicle	30.6	16.8	24.8
Created a disturbance, damage or stole goods	5.7	3.2	4.6
Verbally abused someone	7.3	5.4	6.5
Physically abused someone	2.3	1.1	1.8
	(number)		
Went to work	283,400	117,900	401,300
Went swimming	298,900	110,100	409,000
Operated a boat or hazardous machinery	115,500	6,700	122,200
Drove a vehicle	471,400	188,700	660,100
Created a disturbance, damage or stole goods	87,800	35,900	123,700
Verbally abused someone	112,500	60,700	173,200
Physically abused someone	35,400	12,400	47,800

Note: Base equals recent illicit drug users.

# 17 Drug-related policy

The 2001 NDSHS contained a number of questions that related to survey respondents' opinions and attitudes of drug-related policies.

In this section, responses that indicated either 'strongly support' or 'support' out of six possible responses – strongly support, support, neither support nor oppose, oppose, strongly oppose, don't know enough to say – were grouped into a single category of 'support'. Data are presented on the levels of support for various policy measures and the distribution of a drugs budget.

## Support for policy measures

### Tobacco use

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for various tobacco-related policy measures. In 2001, across all measures ex-smokers and those who had never smoked were more likely than smokers to support policies aimed at reducing the problems associated with tobacco use (Table 17.1). The survey also found that for Australians aged 14 years and over:

- the policy measure with the highest level of support was the stricter enforcement of the law against supplying cigarettes to minors. More than nine in 10 of those who had never smoked (93.3%) or were ex-smokers (93.2%) supported this measure. The majority of smokers (84.3%) also supported this policy measure; and
- bans on smoking in public places, such as the workplace, shopping centres and restaurants, were the next most supported measures.

**Table 17.1: Support for measures to reduce the problems associated with tobacco use, persons aged 14 years and over, by smoking status, Australia, 2001**

Measure	Smoker	Ex-smoker	Never smoked
	(per cent)		
Stricter enforcement of law against supplying minors	84.3	93.2	93.3
Immediate ban on tobacco advertising at sporting events	48.4	69.4	73.1
Making it harder to buy tobacco in shops	28.9	63.3	73.0
Ban smoking			
in the workplace	55.3	85.6	91.0
in shopping centres	66.9	88.2	92.5
in restaurants	60.0	88.5	92.8
in pubs/clubs	20.5	67.9	76.1
Increase tax on tobacco products			
to pay for health education	24.4	69.4	80.6
to contribute to treatment costs	30.8	71.9	81.6
to discourage smoking	25.0	64.5	76.6

## Excessive consumption of alcohol

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for policy measures aimed at reducing the problems associated with excessive alcohol use. Generally the support for these measures was not as high as the level of support for measures to reduce tobacco-related harm (Table 17.2). Other results include:

- In 2001, the measure that received the most support from Australians aged 14 years and over was 'more severe penalties for drink driving'. Nine in 10 abstainers/low-risk drinkers (91.0%) and eight in 10 risky/high-risk drinkers (80.5%) supported this policy.
- Stricter laws against serving drunk customers was the measure which received the next greatest support.
- Increasing the price of alcohol was supported by less than 30% of Australians aged 14 years and over (29.1% of abstainers/low-risk drinkers and 5.7% of risky/high-risk drinkers).

**Table 17.2: Support for measures to reduce the problems associated with excessive alcohol use, persons aged 14 years and over, by drinking status, Australia, 2001**

Measure	Abstainers/ low-risk drinkers	Risky/ high-risk drinkers
	(per cent)	
Increasing the price of alcohol	29.1	5.7
Reducing the number of outlets that sell alcohol	38.3	11.8
Reducing trading hours for pubs and clubs	42.3	15.2
Raising the legal drinking age	51.5	25.1
Increasing the number of alcohol-free events	76.0	48.3
Increasing the number of alcohol-free dry zones	74.5	50.1
Serving only low-alcohol beverages at sporting events	73.8	46.7
Limiting TV advertising until after 9.30 p.m.	76.1	57.7
Banning alcohol sponsorship of sporting events	53.3	27.2
More severe penalties for drink driving	91.0	80.5
Stricter laws against serving drunk customers	90.2	75.6
Restricting late night trading of alcohol	63.3	28.9
Strict monitoring of late night licensed premises	80.0	60.0
Increasing the size of standard drink labels on alcohol containers	73.4	58.2
Adding information on the national drinking guidelines to alcohol containers	77.6	59.5

Note: Respondents could select more than one response.

## Heroin use

Survey respondents were asked their opinion of measures to reduce the problems associated with heroin use (Table 17.3):

- Seven in 10 (73.1%) who had ever used heroin supported regulated injecting rooms. This compares with less than half (45.0%) of those who had not used.
- A greater proportion of those who had never used (63.8%) compared with those who had used (59.0%) supported the use of methadone maintenance programs.
- Rapid detoxification therapy as a measure to reduce the problems associated with heroin use was supported by approximately eight in 10 Australians (77.3% of those who had used heroin and 80.0% of those who had never used).

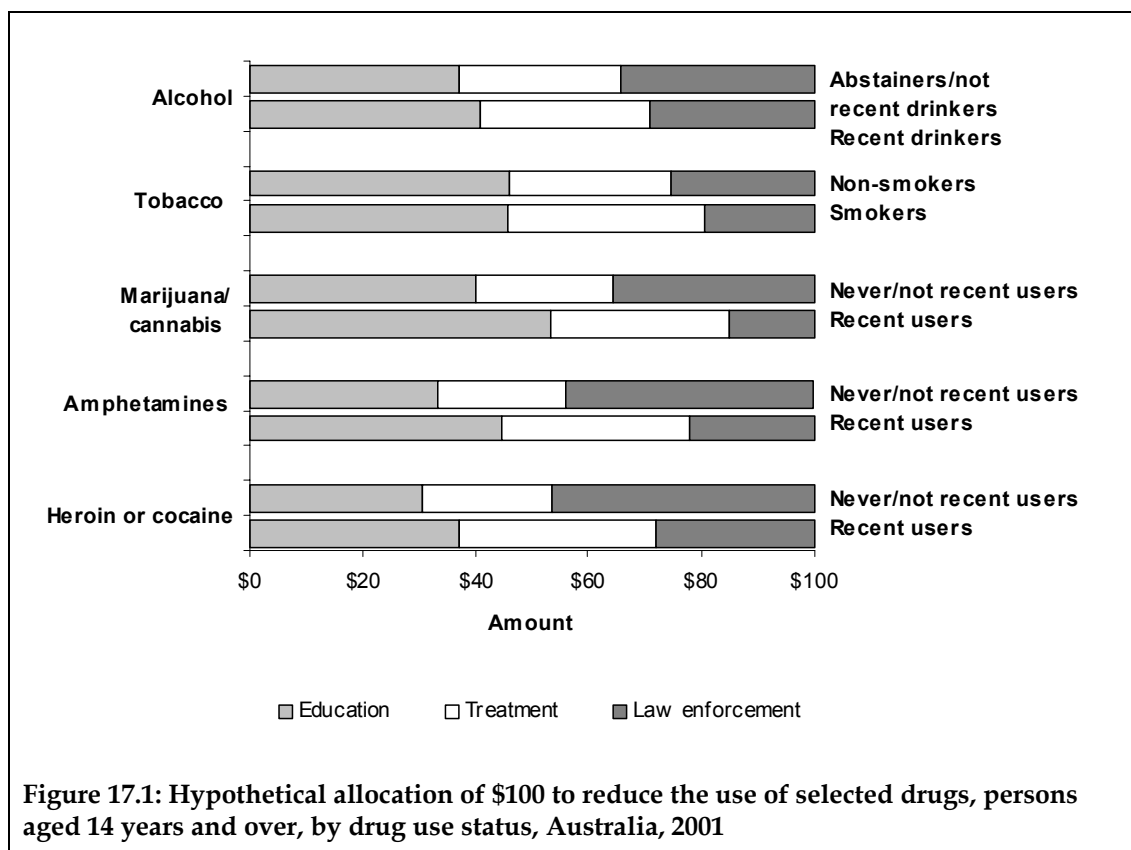
**Table 17.3: Support for measures to reduce the problems associated with heroin use, persons aged 14 years and over, by illicit drug use status, Australia, 2001**

Measure	Used in lifetime	Never used
	(per cent)	
Needle and syringe programs	85.4	58.6
Methadone maintenance programs	59.0	63.8
Treatment with drugs other than methadone	71.6	65.7
Regulated injecting rooms	73.1	44.6
Trial of prescribed heroin	64.3	34.0
Rapid detoxification therapy	77.3	80.0
Use of Naltrexone	77.5	75.2

## Nominal distribution of a drugs budget

In 2001, survey respondents were asked to allocate \$100 across the three areas of education, treatment and law enforcement for each of five drug categories. Across each of the drug categories, education typically received the greater proportion of the allotted \$100 (Figure 17.1). It was also found that:

- the distribution of monies for alcohol-related programs was similar between recent drinkers and those who were never or ex-drinkers. Approximately \$40 was nominated for education, \$30 for treatment and \$30 for law enforcement; and
- for illicit drug use, law enforcement received a greater proportion of the \$100 from those who had never used or were ex-users than recent users.



# 18 Drug-related legislation

## Support for legalisation of illicit drugs

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of support or opposition to the legalisation of four illicit drugs for personal use. Responses of 'strongly support' or 'support' were grouped to indicate general support for legalisation. For all four illicit drug categories, levels of support for the legalisation of these drugs was low (Table 18.1). Results include:

- Support for legalisation was highest for marijuana/cannabis – three in 10 (29.1%) Australians aged 14 years and over approved of legalisation for personal use of this drug.
- Those aged 20–29 years were the age group most likely to support the legalisation of marijuana/cannabis (42.1%).
- Less than one in 10 Australians supported the legalisation of heroin (7.6%), amphetamines/speed (6.8%) and cocaine (6.6%).
- A greater proportion of males than females supported the legalisation of each of these illicit drugs.

**Table 18.1: Support for the legalisation of selected illicit drugs, persons aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
	(per cent)						
	<b>Males</b>						
Marijuana/ cannabis	30.1	46.6	39.9	31.5	24.0	13.6	31.3
Heroin	5.6	6.9	10.7	8.3	8.0	6.7	7.9
Amphetamines/ speed	7.3	9.6	8.5	6.7	5.9	5.9	7.3
Cocaine	5.1	7.4	8.5	6.8	6.9	6.2	6.9
	<b>Females</b>						
Marijuana/ cannabis	28.1	37.5	33.4	26.5	22.5	14.5	27.0
Heroin	4.9	5.4	7.5	8.2	8.6	7.9	7.2
Amphetamines/ speed	7.0	6.0	6.2	6.3	6.5	6.0	6.3
Cocaine	5.6	5.3	6.2	6.4	7.3	6.2	6.2
	<b>Persons</b>						
Marijuana/ cannabis	29.1	42.1	36.6	29.1	23.2	14.1	29.1
Heroin	5.2	6.1	9.1	8.3	8.2	7.3	7.6
Amphetamines/ speed	7.2	7.8	7.3	6.5	6.2	5.9	6.8
Cocaine	5.3	6.3	7.3	6.6	7.1	6.2	6.6

Note: Base is those who had an opinion.

Between recent users and those who had never used or were ex-users, there were differences in the level of support for the legalisation of illicit drugs:

- Three-quarters (76.9%) of recent users of marijuana/cannabis supported the legalisation of this drug, compared with 21.7% of those who were not recent users of marijuana/cannabis.
- The legalisation of heroin for personal use was supported by 31.4% of recent users of heroin, compared with 7.5% of those who were not recent users of this drug.

## Support for increased penalties for the sale or supply of illicit drugs

Survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for increased penalties for the sale or supply of illicit drugs. In 2001, the proportion of Australians aged 14 years and over that supported increased penalties was similar between males and females (Table 18.2):

- Approximately three in five males (57.9%) and females (64.4%) supported increased penalties for marijuana/cannabis sale or supply.
- Increased penalties for the sale or supply of heroin, amphetamines/speed and cocaine were supported by over 80% of both males and females.
- Those aged 60 years and over were the age group most likely to support increased penalties for the sale or supply of marijuana/cannabis (80.1%), heroin (90.9%), amphetamines/speed (90.7%) and cocaine (90.8%).

**Table 18.2: Support for increased penalties for the sale or supply of illicit drugs, persons aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
(per cent)							
<b>Males</b>							
Marijuana/ cannabis	53.0	41.5	50.6	57.6	64.7	78.9	57.9
Heroin	83.1	86.1	86.5	89.3	89.1	90.8	87.8
Amphetamines/ speed	77.8	78.2	83.4	87.1	88.8	90.4	84.7
Cocaine	80.8	81.1	84.6	88.4	88.7	90.7	86.0
<b>Females</b>							
Marijuana/ cannabis	54.1	50.4	58.5	64.2	72.5	81.1	64.4
Heroin	82.1	85.8	89.4	90.4	90.9	90.9	88.8
Amphetamines/ speed	78.4	80.3	86.9	89.3	90.5	91.0	86.7
Cocaine	80.4	82.9	87.6	90.2	91.0	90.9	87.7
<b>Persons</b>							
Marijuana/ cannabis	53.5	45.9	54.6	60.8	68.5	80.1	61.1
Heroin	82.6	86.0	88.0	89.8	89.9	90.9	88.3
Amphetamines/ speed	78.1	79.2	85.2	88.1	89.6	90.7	85.7
Cocaine	80.6	82.0	86.1	89.3	89.8	90.8	86.9

Note: Base is those who had an opinion.



Levels of support for increased penalties for the sale or supply of illicit drugs differed between recent users and those who were not recent users:

- Those who were not recent users of marijuana/cannabis (68.2%) were four times more likely than recent users (14.9%) to support increased penalties for sale or supply.
- More than four in five of those who had not used heroin (88.4%), amphetamines/speed (87.4%) or cocaine (87.6%) in the past 12 months supported increased penalties.
- About half of recent users of heroin (54.9%) and two in five recent users of amphetamine/speed (39.7%) and cocaine (36.9%) supported increased penalties.

## **Support for actions against those in possession of illicit drugs**

Survey respondents selected the single action they thought best described what should happen to anyone found in possession of small quantities of selected drugs for personal use (Table 18.3):

- For the possession of marijuana/cannabis for personal use, the action most likely to be supported by Australians aged 14 years and over (48.2%) was a caution or warning, or no action.
- Referral to treatment or a drug education program was the action most supported for possession of ecstasy/designer drugs (42.5%). A quarter of Australians (23.8%) supported a monetary fine for ecstasy/designer drug possession.
- Almost half of Australians (47.0%) supported referral to treatment or a drug education program for persons found in possession of heroin. A prison sentence was the next most supported action (27.8%).
- For the possession of amphetamines/speed, the most supported action (43.8%) was referral to treatment or a drug education program.

**Table 18.3: Support for actions against anyone found in possession of illicit drugs, persons aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Australia, 2001**

Action	Age group				All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	
(per cent)					
<b>Marijuana/cannabis</b>					
A caution/warning or no action	48.3	55.5	51.2	44.7	48.2
Referral to treatment/education program	18.6	18.8	21.8	31.8	26.2
Fine	22.6	18.7	18.2	14.3	16.7
Community service order or weekend detention	6.4	3.8	4.0	4.2	4.4
A prison sentence	2.8	2.5	3.9	4.2	3.7
Some other arrangement	1.2	0.6	1.0	0.8	0.8
<b>Ecstasy/designer drugs</b>					
A caution/warning or no action	8.5	13.8	8.6	6.6	8.4
Referral to treatment/education program	30.7	32.0	39.7	49.5	42.5
Fine	37.3	29.5	23.7	19.1	23.8
Community service order or weekend detention	10.3	8.9	8.8	6.8	8.0
A prison sentence	11.4	14.6	17.4	16.7	15.9
Some other arrangement	1.8	1.2	1.8	1.3	1.4
<b>Heroin</b>					
A caution/warning or no action	1.4	3.0	2.5	2.4	2.4
Referral to treatment/education program	35.8	43.0	46.0	51.0	47.0
Fine	23.3	13.5	11.0	11.4	13.0
Community service order or weekend detention	12.3	8.1	7.4	5.4	7.0
A prison sentence	24.9	28.7	29.8	27.4	27.8
Some other arrangement	2.2	3.9	3.2	2.3	2.7
<b>Amphetamines/speed</b>					
A caution/warning or no action	5.1	7.8	4.7	3.5	4.7
Referral to treatment/education program	28.4	35.4	42.7	50.3	43.8
Fine	33.6	22.9	18.0	16.2	19.6
Community service order or weekend detention	13.0	9.9	8.8	6.8	8.4
A prison sentence	17.0	21.1	23.5	21.2	21.2
Some other arrangement	2.9	2.8	2.2	2.0	2.3

Note: Base equals those who had an opinion.

Typically recent users of illicit drugs were less likely than those who had not used in the past 12 months to support actions against those found in possession of small quantities of these drugs:

- Four in five (83.2%) Australians aged 14 years and over who had used marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months supported a warning or no action, compared with 42.9% of those who had not used.
- Among those who had used ecstasy/designer drugs in the last 12 months, a warning or no action was the most supported action (48.2%). Those who had not used in the last 12 months considered education or treatment to be the action most appropriate (43.0%).
- Of those who had used heroin in the last 12 months, one in five (21.1%) supported no action if found in the possession of these drugs. This action was supported by 2.3% of those who had not used.
- For possession of amphetamines/speed, the action most supported by both recent users (40.4%) and those who had not used in the last 12 months (44.6%) was education and referral to treatment.
- For all four illicit drugs, support for a prison sentence was more likely to be nominated by those who were not recent users than by recent users.

## Legalisation of marijuana

Survey respondents were asked if they thought that the possession of small quantities of marijuana/cannabis for personal use should be a criminal offence. About four in 10 (37.7%) Australians aged 14 years and over considered that offenders should acquire a criminal record (Table 18.4):

- Support for the possession of marijuana/cannabis being a criminal offence was similar between males (37.1%) and females (38.4%).
- Those aged 60 years and over (52.4%) were the age group most likely to support marijuana/cannabis possession as a criminal offence.
- Marijuana/cannabis possession being a criminal offence was least likely to be supported by those aged 20–29 years (28.7%).

**Table 18.4: Support for the possession of marijuana/cannabis being a criminal offence, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Age group						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	
	(per cent)						
Males	39.0	26.4	29.6	33.8	41.9	54.6	37.1
Females	42.1	31.0	34.5	34.0	40.1	50.3	38.4
Persons	40.5	28.7	32.0	33.9	41.1	52.4	37.7

Note: Base is those who had an opinion.

Differences were also found between recent users of marijuana/cannabis and those who had not used in the past 12 months:

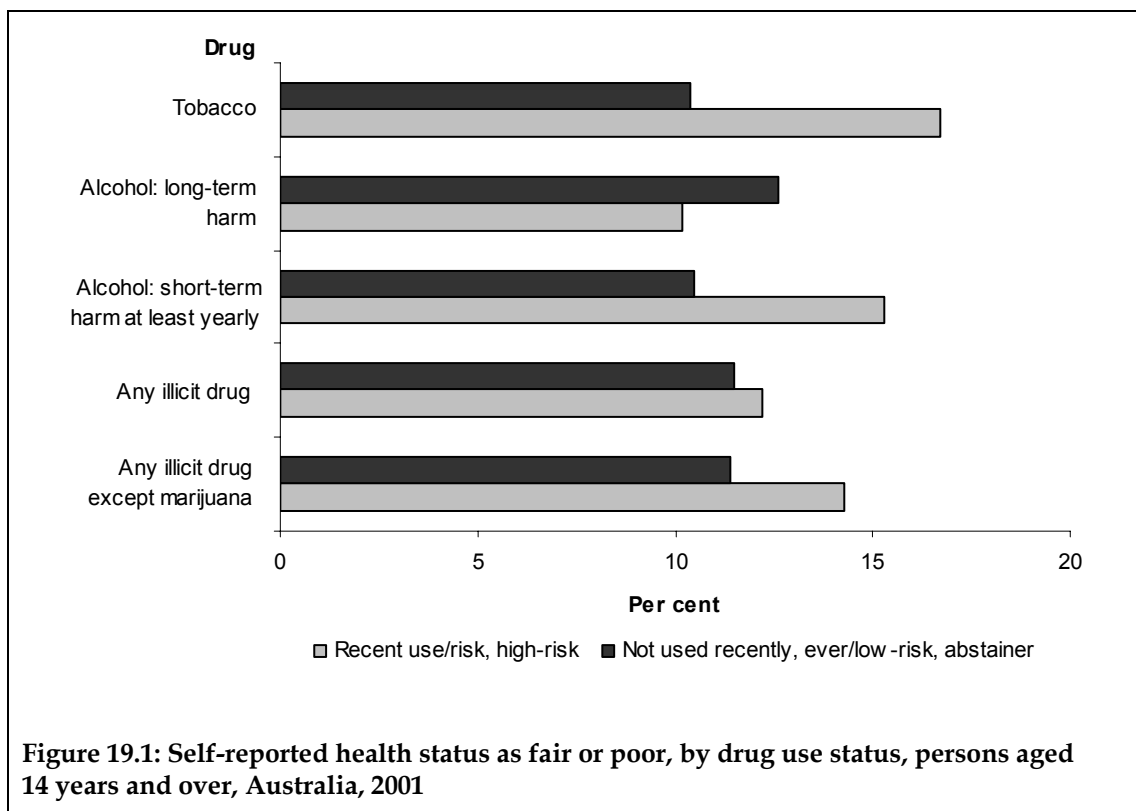
- Of recent users of marijuana/cannabis who had an opinion, 3.5% thought it should be a criminal offence. In comparison, about four in 10 (43.2%) of those who had not used in the last 12 months thought it should be a criminal offence.
- If marijuana/cannabis were legal to use, two-thirds (66.6%) of recent users indicated that they would use marijuana/cannabis about as often as they do now. Less than one in 10 (7.8%) recent users indicated they would use more often than they do now.
- Over 90% (93.0%) of those who were not recent users of marijuana/cannabis indicated that they would not use marijuana/cannabis even if it was legal.

# 19 Drugs and health

## Self-assessed health status

Respondents were asked to self-report their general health status. Just over one in eight (11.8%) Australians aged 14 years and over reported their health as fair or poor. However, the proportions varied by history of recent drug use (Figure 19.1):

- One in six smokers (16.6%) reported their health as fair or poor, compared with one in 10 (10.2%) non-smokers.
- Drinkers at risk of alcohol-related harm in the long term were more likely than abstainers or low-risk drinkers to report their health as fair or poor (15.3% and 10.2% respectively).
- In contrast, those who drank at risky or high-risk levels for harm in the short term at least once in the last 12 months were less likely than those who drank at low-risk levels or abstainers, to rate their health as fair or poor (10.2% and 12.6% respectively).



## Use of someone else's prescribed medication

Respondents were asked if, when they were feeling unwell, they had ever used medication prescribed or recommended for another person (Table 19.1):

- Of the population aged 14 years and over, 15.8% of males and 15.1% of females (when feeling unwell) had used medication prescribed or recommended for another person.
- The type of medication most commonly used was pain-killers/analgesics.

**Table 19.1: Type of medication used, by those who had used medication prescribed or recommended for another person, by sex, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

Drug	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Pain-killers/analgesics	51.4	53.3	52.3
Antibiotics	22.5	20.1	21.3
Anti-depressants	3.2	2.8	3.0
Tranquillisers/sleeping pills	9.3	10.8	10.0
Asthma medication	13.0	17.4	15.1
Herbal and alternative medicines	20.6	24.2	22.4
Others	14.9	12.6	13.8
<b>Any of the above</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>15.4</b>

### Notes

1. Base equals those who had used medication prescribed or recommended for another person.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Environmental tobacco smoke

Respondents were asked to indicate if they avoided places where they may be exposed to other people's cigarette smoke. In 2001, never/ex-smokers indicated that they always avoided places where they might be exposed to other people's tobacco smoke (37.6%) at a rate 11 times greater than that of recent smokers (3.4%) (Table 19.2). It was also found that for Australians aged 14 years and over:

- two-thirds of recent smokers (66.4%) never avoided exposure to other people's tobacco smoke compared to 13.2% of never/ex-smokers; and
- a greater proportion of female never/ex-smokers (40.8%) than males (34.2%) avoided environmental tobacco smoke all the time.

**Table 19.2: Avoidance of places where respondents may be exposed to other people's tobacco smoke, recent smokers and never/ex-smokers, aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Frequency	Recent smokers			Never/ex-smokers		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
Yes, always	4.1	2.4	3.4	34.2	40.8	37.6
Yes, sometimes	31.2	29.2	30.3	50.5	47.9	49.2
No, never	64.7	68.4	66.4	15.2	11.3	13.2

Non-smokers were asked if, in the last 12 months, any member of their household had smoked at least one cigarette, cigar or pipe per day in the home (Table 19.2):

- One in 10 (10.6%) non-smokers lived in households where someone smoked at least one cigarette, cigar or pipe inside every day.
- Similar proportions of male (73.7%) and female (72.7%) non-smokers lived in households where no-one at home smoked regularly.

**Table 19.3: Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke in the home at least daily, non-smokers aged 14 years and over, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Proportion	Male	Female	Persons
	(per cent)		
Yes, inside the home	10.8	10.3	10.6
No, only smokes outside the home	15.4	17.0	16.3
No-one at home regularly smokes	73.7	72.7	73.2

# 20 Drugs and young people

## Introduction

This chapter presents data on the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs by Australians aged 14–17 years. This group is a sub-group of the 14–19 year old age group presented in the other chapters of this report. The 14–17 year age group represents 7.1% of the population aged 14 years and over (7.4% of the male population and 6.8% of the female population).

## Tobacco

### Tobacco use

In 2001, around one in nine (11.5%) persons aged 14–17 years smoked tobacco daily (Table 20.1):

- Females were more likely than males to smoke daily (12.7% and 10.3% respectively); however, they were less likely than males to be weekly or less than weekly smokers.
- Four in five (81.7%) had never smoked, and 2.9% were ex-smokers.

**Table 20.1: Tobacco smoking status, persons aged 14–17 years, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Smoking status	Males	Females	Persons
		(per cent)	
Daily	10.3	12.7	11.5
Weekly	2.1	1.4	1.8
Less than weekly	2.3	1.9	2.1
Ex-smokers	2.4	3.4	2.9
Never smoked	82.8	80.5	81.7

### Means of obtaining

The sale of cigarettes to persons under the age of 18 years is illegal in all States and Territories in Australia. Persons aged 14–17 years who had used tobacco in the last 12 months were asked where they obtained this drug (Table 20.2):

- Under-age smokers most commonly obtained tobacco from a shop or retail outlet (82.6%). Females (86.0%) were more likely than males (79.0%) to do so.
- The second most commonly nominated means of obtaining tobacco was through friends or relatives (47.1%).



**Table 20.2: Means of obtaining tobacco, smokers aged 14–17 years, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Means of obtaining	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Friend or relative	45.4	48.8	47.1
Bought at shop/retail outlet	79.0	86.0	82.6
Paid cash but not at retail outlet	26.4	25.8	26.1
Stole or traded goods or services	21.7	11.6	16.6
Other	19.2	13.5	16.3

**Notes**

1. Base equals those who reported smoking daily, weekly, or less than weekly.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Use of tobacco by friends and acquaintances

Respondents aged 14–17 years were asked what proportion of their friends and acquaintances smoked tobacco (Table 20.3):

- Three in five (60.2%) male smokers and three-quarters (74.7%) of female smokers reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances smoked. In contrast, 10.1% of male and 14.9% of female ex-smokers or never smokers reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances smoked.
- Although smokers reported only having friends and acquaintances who smoked (i.e. no friends or acquaintances who didn't smoke), some ex-smokers or never smokers reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances smoked.

**Table 20.3: Tobacco smoking by friends and acquaintances, persons aged 14–17 years, by tobacco smoking status and sex, Australia, 2001**

Proportion of friends	Smoker <sup>(a)</sup>	Ex-smoker/ never-smoker	All
<b>Males</b>			
All or most	60.2	10.1	17.6
About half	31.8	20.5	22.2
A few	8.0	53.6	46.7
None	–	15.8	13.5
<b>Females</b>			
All or most	74.7	14.9	24.5
About half	17.8	21.5	20.9
A few	7.6	50.2	43.4
None	–	13.4	11.3
<b>Persons</b>			
All or most	67.4	12.4	20.9
About half	24.8	21.0	21.6
A few	7.8	51.9	45.1
None	–	14.7	12.4

(a) Daily, weekly and less often than weekly smokers.

## Environmental tobacco smoke at home

- In 2001, more than one in two (58.9%) non-smokers aged 14–17 years lived in households where no-one regularly smoked cigarettes, cigars or pipes (Table 20.4).
- A greater proportion of female (23.6%) non-smokers aged 14–17 years than male non-smokers (20.9%) lived in a household where at least one other member smoked at least one cigarette, cigar or pipe per day in the home.

**Table 20.4: Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke in the home at least daily, non-smokers aged 14–17 years, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Proportion	Male	Female	Persons
	(per cent)		
Yes, inside the home	20.9	23.6	22.2
No, only smokes outside the home	20.9	16.8	18.9
No-one at home regularly smokes	58.1	59.6	58.9

## Alcohol

### Alcohol consumption

Two-thirds (66.3%) of persons aged 14–17 years had consumed a full glass of alcohol in the last 12 months. Other findings include:

- Almost half (47.8%) of persons aged 14–17 years consumed alcohol less often than once a week in the last 12 months (Table 20.5).
- About one in five (18.2%) persons aged 14–17 years drank alcohol weekly.

**Table 20.5: Alcohol drinking status, persons aged 14–17 years, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Drinking status	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Daily	0.2 *	0.5 *	0.3
Weekly	19.6	16.6	18.2
Less than weekly	44.3	51.6	47.8
Ex-drinkers <sup>(a)</sup>	6.6	4.3	5.5
Never drank a full glass	29.2	27.0	28.1

(a) Consumed a full serve of alcohol but not in the last 12 months.

- The proportion of persons aged 14–17 years (34.4%) who put themselves at risk (risky or high risk) of alcohol related harm in the short term on at least one drinking occasion during the last 12 months was similar to that for the whole population (34.4%).
- For the population aged 14 years and over, 9.9% drank at a risky or high risk level for alcohol-related harm in the long term. Among persons aged 14–17 years, this proportion represented 7.3%.
- Abstainers represented 17.5% of the population aged 14 years and over, and 33.6% among persons aged 14–17 years.

## Means of obtaining

The sale of alcohol to persons under the age of 18 years is illegal in all States and Territories in Australia. Persons aged 14–17 years who had used alcohol in the last 12 months were asked how they obtained alcohol (Table 20.6):

- Among under-age drinkers, the most commonly nominated means of obtaining alcohol was a friend or relative (69.2%).
- Purchase from a shop or retail outlet was the next most commonly nominated means for obtaining alcohol among persons aged 14–17 years (47.1%). Female drinkers (49.9%) were more likely than male drinkers (44.1%) to obtain from a shop or retail outlet.

**Table 20.6: Means of obtaining alcohol, recent drinkers aged 14–17 years, by sex, Australia, 2001**

Means of obtaining	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)		
Friend or relative	65.6	72.6	69.2
Bought at shop/retail outlet	44.1	49.9	47.1
Paid cash but not at retail outlet	19.9	16.0	17.9
Stole or traded goods or services	10.4	4.9	7.6
Other	16.0	10.9	13.4

### Notes

1. Base equals recent drinkers.
2. Respondents could select more than one response.

## Alcohol consumption by friends and acquaintances

Respondents aged 14–17 years were asked what proportion of their friends and acquaintances consumed alcohol (Table 20.7):

- Three-quarters of male (73.0%) and female (78.0%) recent drinkers reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances consumed alcohol. In contrast, 20.9% of male and 30.1% of female ex-drinkers or never drinkers reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances consumed alcohol.
- Although almost all recent drinkers reported that their friends or acquaintances consumed alcohol, one-fifth (20.9%) of male and one-third (30.1%) of female ex-drinkers or never drinkers reported that all or most of their friends or acquaintances consumed alcohol.

**Table 20.7: Alcohol consumption by friends and acquaintances, persons aged 14–17 years, by alcohol consumption status and sex, Australia, 2001**

Proportion of friends	Recent drinker <sup>(a)</sup>	Ex-drinker/ never drinker <sup>(b)</sup>	All
<b>Males</b>			
All or most	73.0	20.9	54.2
About half	13.6	19.4	15.7
A few	13.0	48.1	25.7
None	0.3	11.6	4.4
<b>Females</b>			
All or most	78.0	30.1	63.2
About half	12.2	16.7	13.6
A few	8.7	35.9	17.1
None	1.1	17.3	6.1
<b>Persons</b>			
All or most	75.5	25.0	58.6
About half	12.9	18.2	14.7
A few	10.8	42.6	21.5
None	0.7	14.2	5.2

(a) Consumed a full serve of alcohol in the last 12 months.

(b) Ex-drinker was a person who had consumed a full serve of alcohol but not in the last 12 months; a never drinker was a person who had never consumed a full serve of alcohol.

## Illicit drugs

Almost one-third (31.0%) of persons aged 14–17 years had used an illicit drug in their lifetime. When marijuana/cannabis use is excluded, this drops to 11.7% (Table 20.8). Of persons aged 14–17 years:

- Almost one-quarter (23.1%) had used an illicit drug in the last 12 months. The proportions were similar for males (23.3%) and females (23.0%).
- Fewer than one in 10 (8.4%) had used an illicit drug other than marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months. The proportion of female recent users (10.5%) was higher than for males (6.3%).
- One in five (20.7%) had used marijuana/cannabis in the last 12 months, the proportions for males and females were similar (21.3% and 20.1% respectively).

**Table 20.8: Use of illicit drugs, persons aged 14–17 years, by sex, Australia, 2001**

	Males	Females	Persons
<b>Any illicit drug</b>		(per cent)	
In lifetime	30.1	32.0	31.0
In last 12 months	23.3	23.0	23.1
<b>Any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis</b>			
In lifetime	9.2	14.4	11.7
In last 12 months	6.3	10.5	8.4
<b>Marijuana/cannabis</b>			
In lifetime	27.8	27.6	27.7
In last 12 months	21.3	20.1	20.7

# 21 Special populations—summary tables of drug use

Table 21.1: Summary tables of drug use for special populations, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001

	Sex		Socioeconomic status (quintile)				
	Male	Female	1	2	3	4	5
	(per cent)						
<b>Tobacco smoking status</b>							
Smoker	25.7	20.8	25.8	25.1	23.7	23.6	18.4
Not recent or never smoker	74.3	79.2	74.2	74.9	76.3	76.4	81.6
<b>Risk of long-term alcohol-related harm</b>							
Abstainer	14.1	20.8	21.1	19.5	17.2	16.2	13.6
Low risk	75.6	69.8	68.9	70.6	72.9	73.6	77.2
Risky/high risk	10.2	9.4	10.0	9.9	9.9	10.2	9.2
<b>Risk of short-term alcohol-related harm<sup>(a)</sup></b>							
Abstainer	14.1	20.8	21.1	19.5	17.2	16.2	13.6
Low risk	46.5	49.6	47.1	48.2	47.3	47.4	49.6
Risky/high risk	39.3	29.6	31.9	32.2	35.5	36.3	36.8
<b>Use of any illicit drug</b>							
Recent use	19.8	14.2	16.0	16.3	18.1	17.7	17.0
Not used recently/ever	80.2	85.8	84.0	83.7	81.9	82.3	83.0
<b>Use of any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis</b>							
Recent use	9.4	7.4	7.2	8.1	9.2	9.1	8.7
Not used recently/ever	90.6	92.6	92.8	91.9	90.8	90.9	91.3
<b>Use of marijuana/cannabis</b>							
Recent use	15.8	10.0	12.4	12.1	13.6	13.4	13.4
Not used recently/ever	84.2	90.0	87.6	87.9	86.4	86.6	86.6
<b>Perceptions and attitudes towards drugs</b>							
<i>Drugs associated with a 'drug problem'</i>							
Alcohol	7.9	7.7	6.7	8.2	7.8	7.6	8.4
Tobacco	2.8	2.6	3.1	3.1	2.2	2.5	2.4
Marijuana	23.8	23.5	28.7	27.4	23.9	22.2	16.8
Heroin	50.6	49.6	44.9	44.9	50.8	51.8	58.1
Other	14.1	16.0	16.0	15.7	14.6	15.4	13.9
None/can't think of any	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.5
<i>Most serious concern for the community</i>							
Excess drinking of alcohol	20.0	24.6	18.7	21.8	22.7	22.8	24.7
Tobacco smoking	20.3	17.6	17.6	18.7	17.9	19.9	20.6
Marijuana/cannabis use	5.1	5.6	7.0	6.4	5.1	4.5	3.7
Heroin use	36.6	33.0	35.2	32.9	36.3	35.1	35.1
Other	17.8	18.9	21.2	19.8	17.7	17.5	15.7
None of these	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
<i>Approval of regular use by an adult</i>							
Alcohol	81.4	68.0	73.1	72.0	74.9	75.4	78.4
Tobacco	42.5	36.8	44.7	41.6	40.8	39.6	33.0
Marijuana	27.4	20.1	23.0	23.1	24.9	23.2	24.5
Heroin	1.5	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.3	1.2	1.4
Other	14.1	9.8	11.8	12.0	12.9	11.2	11.7

(continued)

**Table 21.1: Summary tables of drug use for special populations, persons aged 14 years and over, Australia, 2001**

	Geography		Main language spoken at home		Indigenous status	
	Urban	Rural/ remote	English	Other	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
	(per cent)					
<b>Tobacco smoking status</b>						
Smoker	22.5	25.0	23.6	17.8	49.9	22.8
Not recent or never smoker	77.5	75.0	76.4	82.2	50.1	77.2
<b>Risk of long-term alcohol-related harm</b>						
Abstainer	17.6	17.4	15.7	40.8	20.6	17.3
Low risk	73.2	71.3	74.0	55.9	59.5	73.0
Risky/high risk	9.3	11.3	10.3	3.3	19.9	9.7
<b>Risk of short-term alcohol-related harm<sup>(a)</sup></b>						
Abstainer	17.6	17.4	15.7	40.8	20.6	17.3
Low risk	48.5	46.8	48.3	44.9	30.7	48.4
Risky/high risk	33.9	35.8	36.0	14.3	48.7	34.3
<b>Use of any illicit drug</b>						
Recent use	17.3	16.1	17.4	10.5	31.8	16.7
Not used recently/ever	82.7	83.9	82.6	89.5	68.2	83.3
<b>Use of any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis</b>						
Recent use	9.0	6.8	8.5	7.4	12.7	8.3
Not used recently/ever	91.0	93.2	91.5	92.6	87.3	91.7
<b>Use of marijuana/cannabis</b>						
Recent use	13.1	12.3	13.5	5.0	27.3	12.7
Not used recently/ever	86.9	87.7	86.5	95.0	72.7	87.3
<b>Perceptions and attitudes towards drugs</b>						
<i>Drugs associated with a 'drug problem'</i>						
Alcohol	7.6	8.5	7.8	7.1	8.0	7.8
Tobacco	2.7	2.5	2.6	3.9	3.0	2.6
Marijuana	21.0	30.8	23.8	21.8	36.0	23.5
Heroin	52.4	43.9	50.7	42.5	38.1	50.4
Other	15.5	13.8	14.6	21.6	14.2	15.0
None/can't think of any	0.8	0.4	0.5	3.1	0.6	0.6
<i>Most serious concern for the community</i>						
Excess drinking of alcohol	21.3	25.0	22.9	14.9	17.3	22.4
Tobacco smoking	19.4	17.8	19.1	16.3	10.4	19.0
Marijuana/cannabis use	4.6	7.4	5.3	6.2	15.5	5.2
Heroin use	36.0	31.5	34.4	40.0	29.8	34.9
Other	18.5	18.0	18.0	22.2	25.5	18.2
None of these	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.3	1.5	0.3
<i>Approval of regular use by an adult</i>						
Alcohol	74.6	75.1	76.2	56.3	72.9	74.8
Tobacco	38.7	42.1	39.9	36.5	65.7	39.3
Marijuana	23.9	23.5	24.8	9.8	38.9	23.6
Heroin	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.3	1.1
Other	12.5	10.5	11.8	14.1	18.5	11.9

(a) On at least one occasion in the last 12 months.

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# Appendix 1: Glossary

<b>Abstainer (alcohol)</b>	Never consumed a full serve of alcohol.
<b>Chop-chop</b>	Unbranded loose tobacco.
<b>Concurrent use</b>	Use of two or more substances at the same time.
<b>Ever use</b>	Used at least once in lifetime.
<b>Ex-drinker</b>	A person who had consumed a full serve of alcohol in their lifetime, but not in the last 12 months.
<b>Ex-smoker</b>	A person who has smoked at least 100 cigarettes or the equivalent tobacco in their lifetime, but does not smoke at all now (AIHW 2001).
<b>Ex-user</b>	A person who has used a substance in their lifetime, but not in the last 12 months.
<b>High risk (alcohol)</b>	Defines a level of drinking at which there is substantial risk of serious harm, and above which risk continues to increase rapidly (NHMRC 2001).
<b>Illicit drugs</b>	<p>Illegal drugs, drugs and volatile substances used illicitly, and pharmaceuticals used for non-medical purposes. The survey included questions on the following illicit drugs:</p> <p>Pain-killers/analgesics* tranquillisers/sleeping pills* steroids* barbiturates* amphetamines* marijuana/cannabis heroin methadone** other opiates* cocaine LSD/synthetic hallucinogens natural hallucinogens ecstasy and other designer drugs inhalants (any) injected drug</p> <p><i>Note:</i> * used for non-medical purposes ** non-maintenance program</p>
<b>Long-term risk (alcohol)</b>	The level of risk associated with regular daily patterns of drinking, defined by the total amount of alcohol typically consumed per week (NHMRC 2001).



<b>Low risk (alcohol)</b>	Defines a level of drinking at which there is only a minimal risk of harm. At this level, there may be health benefits for some of the population (NHMRC 2001).
<b>Never smoker</b>	A person who does not smoke now and has smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes or the equivalent tobacco in their lifetime (AIHW 2001).
<b>Non-maintenance</b>	Use of substance other than that which was supplied as part of a medically supervised maintenance program.
<b>Non-medical use</b>	Use of drugs either alone or with other drugs in order to induce or enhance a drug experience, for performance enhancement, for cosmetic purposes.
<b>Non-smoker</b>	Never or ex-smoker.
<b>Recent</b>	In the last 12 months.
<b>Risky (alcohol)</b>	Defines a level of drinking at which risk of harm is significantly increased beyond any possible benefits (NHMRC 2001).
<b>Short-term risk (alcohol)</b>	The risk of harm (particularly injury or death) in the short term, that is associated with given levels of drinking on a single day. These levels assume that overall drinking patterns remain within the levels set for long-term risk, and that these heavier drinking days occur a maximum of three times per week. Outside these limits, risk is further increased (NHMRC 2001).
<b>Smoker</b>	A person who reported currently smoking daily, weekly or less often than weekly.
<b>Standard drink</b>	(full serve) Containing 10 grams of alcohol (equivalent to 12.5 millilitres of alcohol) (NHMRC 2001).

# Appendix 2: Population estimates

Table A2.1: Population estimates, by age and sex, Australia, 2001

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Persons</b>
14–19	832,643	792,984	1,625,627
20–29	1,439,327	1,396,468	2,835,795
30–39	1,468,258	1,471,215	2,939,473
40–49	1,416,075	1,418,870	2,834,945
50–59	1,157,625	1,127,111	2,284,736
60+	1,464,465	1,741,925	3,206,390
<b>All ages</b>	<b>7,778,393</b>	<b>7,948,573</b>	<b>15,726,966</b>

Source: AIHW National Population Database.

# Appendix 3: Standard errors

Table A3.1: Prevalence, population estimates, standard errors (SE) and relative standard errors (RSE), Australia, 2001

Prevalence <sup>(a)</sup> (%)	All age groups			14–19			20–29			30–39		
	Pop. <sup>(b)</sup> (No.)	SE <sup>(c)</sup> (%)	RSE <sup>(d)</sup> (%)	Pop. (No.)	SE (%)	RSE (%)	Pop. (No.)	SE (%)	RSE (%)	Pop. (No.)	SE (%)	RSE (%)
<b>Males</b>												
3.00	233,400	0.21	7.1	25,000	0.55	18.3	43,200	0.52	17.2	44,000	0.45	15.0
2.00	155,600	0.18	8.8	16,700	0.45	22.6	28,800	0.42	21.1	29,400	0.37	18.4
0.60	46,700	0.10	16.1	5,000	0.25	41.5	8,600	0.23	38.9	8,800	0.20	33.9
0.50	38,900	0.09	17.7	4,200	0.23	45.5	7,200	0.21	42.6	7,300	0.19	37.1
0.40	31,100	0.08	19.8	3,300	0.20	50.9	5,800	0.19	47.6	5,900	0.17	41.5
0.30	23,300	0.07	22.8	2,500	0.18	58.8	4,300	0.17	55.0	4,400	0.14	48.0
0.25	19,400	0.06	25.0	2,100	0.16	64.5	3,600	0.15	60.3	3,700	0.13	52.6
0.20	15,600	0.06	28.0	1,700	0.14	72.1	2,900	0.13	67.4	2,900	0.12	58.8
0.15	11,700	0.05	32.3	1,200	0.12	83.3	2,200	0.12	77.9	2,200	0.10	67.9
0.10	7,800	0.04	39.6	800	0.10	102.0	1,400	0.10	95.4	1,500	0.08	83.2
0.06	4,400	0.03	52.9	500	0.08	136.3	800	0.07	127.5	800	0.06	111.2
<b>Females</b>												
3.0	238,500	0.17	5.8	23,800	0.55	18.5	41,900	0.42	14.0	44,100	0.33	11.0
2.0	159,000	0.14	7.1	15,900	0.46	22.8	27,900	0.34	17.2	29,400	0.27	13.5
0.6	47,700	0.08	13.1	4,800	0.25	41.9	8,400	0.19	31.6	8,800	0.15	24.8
0.5	39,700	0.07	14.4	4,000	0.23	45.9	7,000	0.17	34.6	7,400	0.14	27.2
0.4	31,800	0.06	16.1	3,200	0.21	51.3	5,600	0.15	38.7	5,900	0.12	30.4
0.3	23,800	0.06	18.6	2,400	0.18	59.3	4,200	0.13	44.8	4,400	0.11	35.2
0.25	19,900	0.05	20.4	2,000	0.16	64.9	3,500	0.12	49.0	3,700	0.10	38.5
0.2	15,900	0.05	22.8	1,600	0.15	72.6	2,800	0.11	54.8	2,900	0.09	43.1
0.15	11,900	0.04	26.3	1,200	0.13	83.9	2,100	0.10	63.3	2,200	0.07	49.8
0.10	7,900	0.03	32.3	800	0.10	102.8	1,400	0.08	77.6	1,500	0.06	61.0
0.06	4,800	0.02	41.7	500	0.08	132.7	800	0.06	100.2	900	0.05	78.7
<b>Persons</b>												
3.0	471,800	0.15	5.0	48,800	0.40	13.2	85,100	0.35	11.6	88,200	0.30	9.9
2.0	314,500	0.12	6.1	32,500	0.32	16.2	56,700	0.29	14.3	58,800	0.24	12.2
0.6	94,400	0.07	11.3	9,800	0.18	29.9	17,000	0.16	26.2	17,600	0.13	22.4
0.50	78,600	0.06	12.4	8,100	0.16	32.7	14,200	0.14	28.7	14,700	0.12	24.6
0.40	62,900	0.06	13.8	6,500	0.15	36.6	11,300	0.13	32.1	11,800	0.11	27.5
0.30	47,200	0.05	16.0	4,900	0.13	42.3	8,500	0.11	37.1	8,800	0.10	31.7
0.25	39,300	0.04	17.5	4,100	0.12	46.3	7,100	0.10	40.7	7,300	0.09	34.8
0.20	31,500	0.04	19.6	3,300	0.10	51.8	5,700	0.09	45.5	5,900	0.08	38.9
0.15	23,600	0.03	22.6	2,400	0.09	59.9	4,300	0.08	52.5	4,400	0.07	44.9
0.10	15,700	0.03	27.7	1,600	0.07	73.3	2,800	0.06	64.4	2,900	0.06	55.0
0.06	9,400	0.02	35.8	1,000	0.06	94.7	1,700	0.05	83.1	1,800	0.04	71.1

(continued)

**Table A3.1: Prevalence, population estimates, standard errors (SE) and relative standard errors (RSE), Australia, 2001**

Prevalence (%)	40-49			50-59			60+		
	Pop. (No.)	SE (%)	RSE (%)	Pop. (No.)	SE (%)	RSE (%)	Pop. (No.)	SE (%)	RSE (%)
<b>Males</b>									
3.0	42,500	0.43	14.3	34,700	0.45	15.0	43,900	0.35	11.6
2.0	28,300	0.35	17.6	23,200	0.37	18.5	29,300	0.29	14.3
0.6	8,500	0.19	32.4	6,900	0.20	34.0	8,800	0.16	26.3
0.50	7,100	0.18	35.5	5,800	0.19	37.2	7,300	0.14	28.8
0.40	5,700	0.16	39.7	4,600	0.17	41.6	5,900	0.13	32.2
0.30	4,200	0.14	45.9	3,500	0.14	48.1	4,400	0.11	37.2
0.25	3,500	0.13	50.3	2,900	0.13	52.7	3,700	0.10	40.8
0.20	2,800	0.11	56.2	2,300	0.12	59.0	2,900	0.09	45.6
0.15	2,100	0.10	64.9	1,700	0.10	68.1	2,200	0.08	52.7
0.10	1,400	0.08	79.5	1,200	0.08	83.4	1,500	0.06	64.6
0.06	800	0.06	106.3	600	0.06	111.5	800	0.05	86.3
<b>Females</b>									
3.0	42,600	0.35	11.8	33,800	0.38	12.8	52,300	0.31	10.3
2.0	28,400	0.29	14.5	22,500	0.31	15.7	34,800	0.25	12.7
0.6	8,500	0.16	26.6	6,800	0.17	28.9	10,500	0.14	23.3
0.50	7,100	0.15	29.2	5,600	0.16	31.7	8,700	0.13	25.5
0.40	5,700	0.13	32.7	4,500	0.14	35.5	7,000	0.11	28.6
0.30	4,300	0.11	37.7	3,400	0.12	41.0	5,200	0.10	33.0
0.25	3,500	0.10	41.3	2,800	0.11	44.9	4,400	0.09	36.2
0.20	2,800	0.09	46.2	2,300	0.10	50.2	3,500	0.08	40.4
0.15	2,100	0.08	53.4	1,700	0.09	58.0	2,600	0.07	46.7
0.10	1,400	0.07	65.4	1,100	0.07	71.1	1,700	0.06	57.2
0.06	900	0.05	84.5	700	0.06	91.8	1,000	0.04	73.9
<b>Persons</b>									
3.0	85,000	0.30	9.9	68,500	0.31	10.5	96,200	0.25	8.3
2.0	56,700	0.24	12.2	45,700	0.26	12.9	64,100	0.20	10.2
0.6	17,000	0.14	22.5	13,700	0.14	23.7	19,200	0.11	18.8
0.50	14,200	0.12	24.7	11,400	0.13	26.0	16,000	0.10	20.6
0.40	11,300	0.11	27.6	9,100	0.12	29.1	12,800	0.09	23.1
0.30	8,500	0.10	31.9	6,900	0.10	33.6	9,600	0.08	26.7
0.25	7,100	0.09	34.9	5,700	0.09	36.8	8,000	0.07	29.2
0.20	5,700	0.08	39.1	4,600	0.08	41.2	6,400	0.07	32.7
0.15	4,300	0.07	45.1	3,400	0.07	47.6	4,800	0.06	37.7
0.10	2,800	0.06	55.3	2,300	0.06	58.3	3,200	0.05	46.2
0.06	1,700	0.04	71.4	1,400	0.05	75.3	1,900	0.04	59.7

- (a) Prevalence estimate (values taken from tables in the report can be interpolated from those provided in this table).  
 (b) Population estimate for given prevalence.  
 (c) Standard error expressed in same units as prevalence.  
 (d) Relative standard error.

**Notes**

- The standard error estimates are modelled on the average design effects across 35 key variables.
- Light shading indicates caution in using estimates; dark shading indicates unreliable for most practical purposes.

# Appendix 4: Selected comparison of the NDSHS and the NHS

Appendix 4 presents a selected comparison of the 2001 AIHW NDSHS and the 2001 ABS NHS results and methods for tobacco and alcohol consumption. For comparison purposes, the NDSHS results in this table are for persons aged 18 years and over, whereas all other results in this report are for persons aged 14 years and over (except where relevant).

**Table A4.1: Comparison of NDSHS and NHS results and methods for tobacco and alcohol consumption, persons aged 18 years and over, Australia, 2001**

Aspect	Unit	NDSHS	NHS
<b>Results</b>			
Tobacco			
Daily smokers	%	20.2	22.4
Occasional smokers	%	3.6	1.9
<i>Total smokers</i>	%	23.8	24.3
Alcohol risk <sup>(a)</sup>			
Abstainers	%	16.3	16.8
Low risk drinkers	%	73.7	68.6 <sup>(b)</sup>
Risky or high risk drinkers	%	10.0	14.6 <sup>(b)</sup>
<i>Total</i>	%	100.0	100.0
<b>Methods</b>			
Sample size <sup>(c)</sup>	No.	25,267	17,918
Interview mode		Self-complete <sup>(d)</sup>	Interviewer administered
Period in the field		July–November 2001	February–November 2001

(a) Respondents of the NHS were asked to indicate their alcohol consumption pattern in the last seven days. Respondents of the NDSHS were asked to indicate their alcohol consumption pattern over the last 12 months and daily. Based on the NHMRC risk levels for alcohol consumption, the NHS risk analysis is therefore comparable to the NDSHS analysis of risk of harm in the long term.

(b) AIHW analysis of NHS data.

(c) For respondents aged 18 years and over.

(d) For the 2,040 respondents to the CATI component the questionnaire was interviewer-administered.

# Appendix 5: Definition of characteristics variables

Table A5.1: Definition of characteristics variables, Australia, 2001

Variable	Description	Measurement	Definition	%
Education	Level of education	Without post-school qualification	Persons who are still at school, did not complete highest level of secondary school, completed highest level of secondary school.	48.1
		With post-school qualification	Persons who have skilled or basic vocational qualification, undergraduate or associate diploma, bachelor degree or higher.	51.9
Labour force status		Currently employed	Working full-time or part-time for pay	53.2
		Student	Full-time or part-time student	11.8
		Unemployed	Unemployed looking for work	3.4
		Retired/pension/home duties	Retired/on a pension/doing home duties	31.6
Main language spoken at home		English	Main language spoken at home is English	93.0
		Other	Main language spoken at home is a language other than English	7.0
Socioeconomic status	Relative socioeconomic status of the statistical local area of the residence based on the Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage	1st quintile	Index score below 949	17.2
		2nd quintile	Index score between 950 and 981	26.4
		3rd quintile	Index score between 982 and 1,012	19.2
		4th quintile	Index score between 1,013 and 1,060	14.1
		5th quintile	Index score between 1,061 and 1,196	23.2
Geography	Locality of residence	Urban	Capital cities and other urban areas	72.8
		Rural/remote	Non-urban areas	27.2
Marital status		Never married	Respondent has never married	26.3
		Divorced/separated/widowed	Respondent is either divorced, separated or widowed	30.5
		Married/de facto	Respondent is either married or in a de facto relationship	37.9
Indigenous status	Self-reported origin	Indigenous	Origin Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both	1.6
		Non-Indigenous	Origin not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	98.4