Alcohol and Other Drugs Prevention Program

National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week
March 18 – 24, 2024

Binge drinking is the most common and costly pattern of excessive alcohol use in the United States. Binge drinking is defined as consuming 5 or more drinks on an occasion for men or 4 or more drinks on an occasion for women. Most people who binge drink are not dependent on alcohol. However, binge drinking is harmful on its own. It is associated with serious injuries and diseases, as well as with a higher risk of alcohol use disorder.

Just how common is binge drinking?
One in six US adults binge drinks, with 25% doing so at least weekly. Binge drinking is just one pattern of excessive drinking, but it accounts for nearly all excessive drinking. Over 90% of US adults who drink excessively report binge drinking. Excessive drinking, including binge drinking, cost the United States $249 billion in 2010, or $2.05 per drink. These costs were from lost work productivity, health care expenditures, criminal justice costs, and other expenses. Binge drinking accounted for 77% of these costs, or $191 billion.