



# Alcohol and Cancer

Meredith Gibson  
Media Director  
Binge and Underage Prevention Initiative



# Myths about Alcohol and Health

A beer garden at a marathon or other athletic competition promotes the health of its participants, keeping in line with the overall theme of the event.

*Fact: Drinking alcohol after exercise causes dehydration and impedes muscle recovery.*

The French are healthier due to their wine consumption.

*Fact: France's heart disease rate turned out to be higher than advertised. As it turns out, all the wine the French consumed was killing them in large numbers, and France passed some of the world's strictest regulations of alcohol advertising to combat prevalent liver cirrhosis.*

Only heavy drinkers have a risk of cancer.

*Fact: Even light to moderate drinkers have a risk of cancer.*

# Overview:

---

## I. Strengths:

A. The data on alcohol and cancer is precise and kept up to date.

## I. Weaknesses:

A. Difficulty finding county and state level data

## I. Data:

A. National and International Data

## FEW AMERICANS AWARE OF ESTABLISHED CANCER RISKS



OF AMERICANS ARE UNAWARE OF  
THESE ESTABLISHED **CANCER** RISKS

### 3 WAYS TO LOWER RISK



eat well



move more



stay lean

### ESTABLISHED CANCER RISKS



ALCOHOL  
39% awareness



RED AND PROCESSED  
MEATS  
35% awareness  
40% awareness



DIETS LOW IN FRUITS  
AND VEGETABLES  
45% awareness



OBESITY  
50% awareness



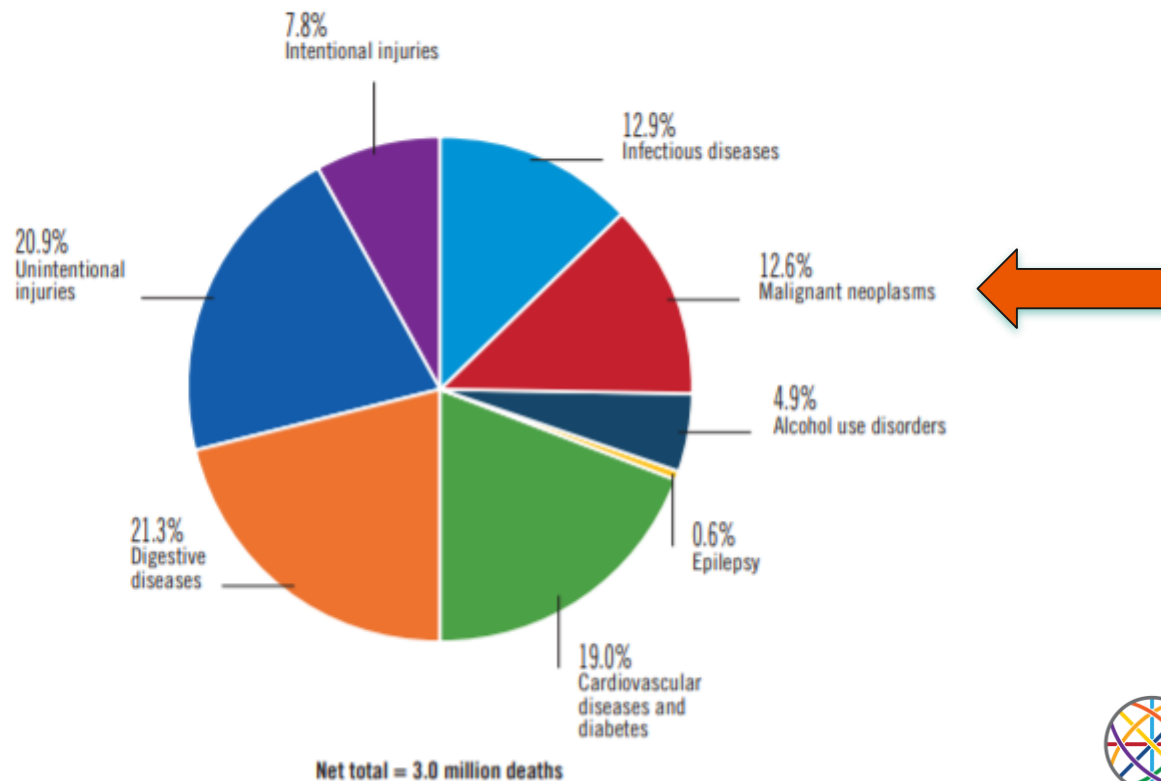
INACTIVITY  
39% awareness

39%



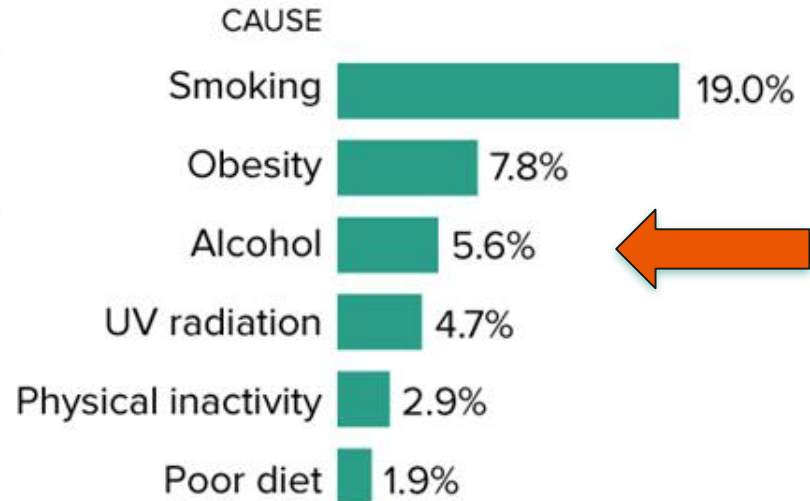
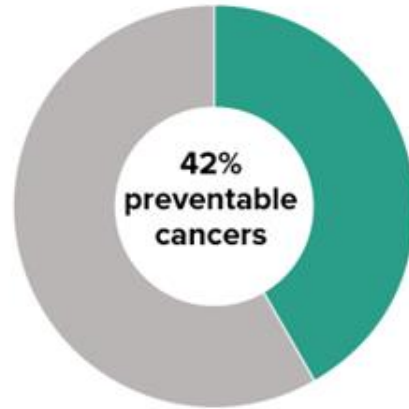
Nearly **1 in 3** cancers could be prevented  
by *eating well, moving more, and staying lean*

**Figure 4.3** Percentage (in %) of alcohol-attributable deaths, as a percentage of all alcohol-attributable deaths, by broad disease category, 2016



## Preventable cancers

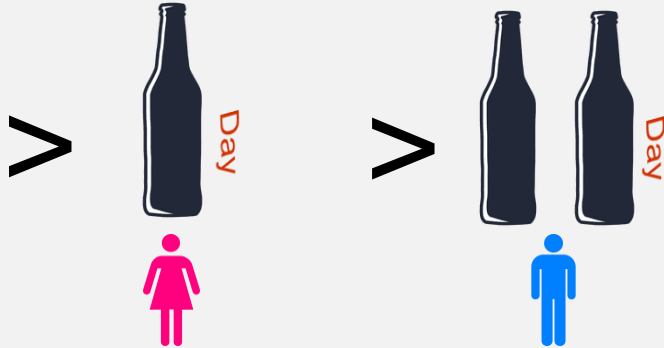
More than 40 percent of cancer cases can be prevented, the American Cancer Society finds in a new report. Here is a list of things people can change and their share of cancer cases:



Source: American Cancer Society

# Types of Drinkers According to Quantity

## Light Drinker



## Moderate Drinker



## Heavy Drinker

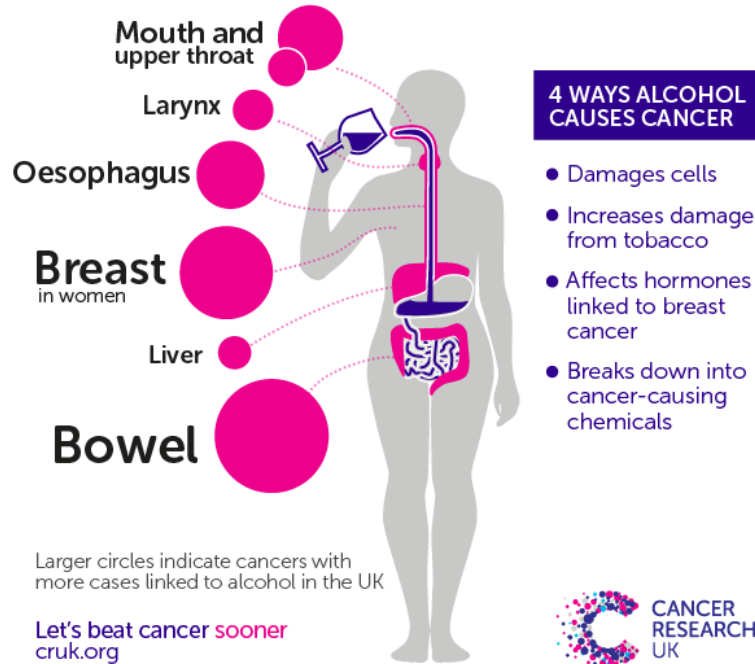


## Binge Drinker



## ALCOHOL CAN CAUSE 7 TYPES OF CANCER

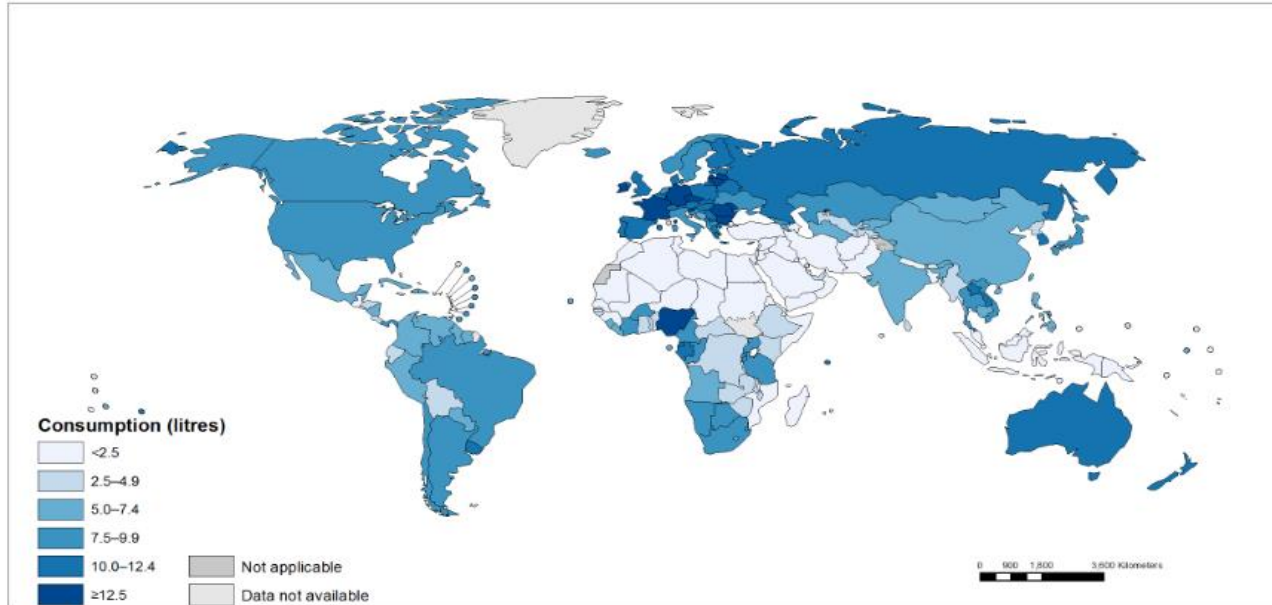
Drinking less alcohol could **prevent 12,800 cancer cases** per year in the UK.





# Alcohol Global Trends

Total alcohol per capita consumption (15+ years; in litres of pure alcohol), 2016



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Data Source: World Health Organization  
Map Production: Information Evidence and Research (IER)  
World Health Organization

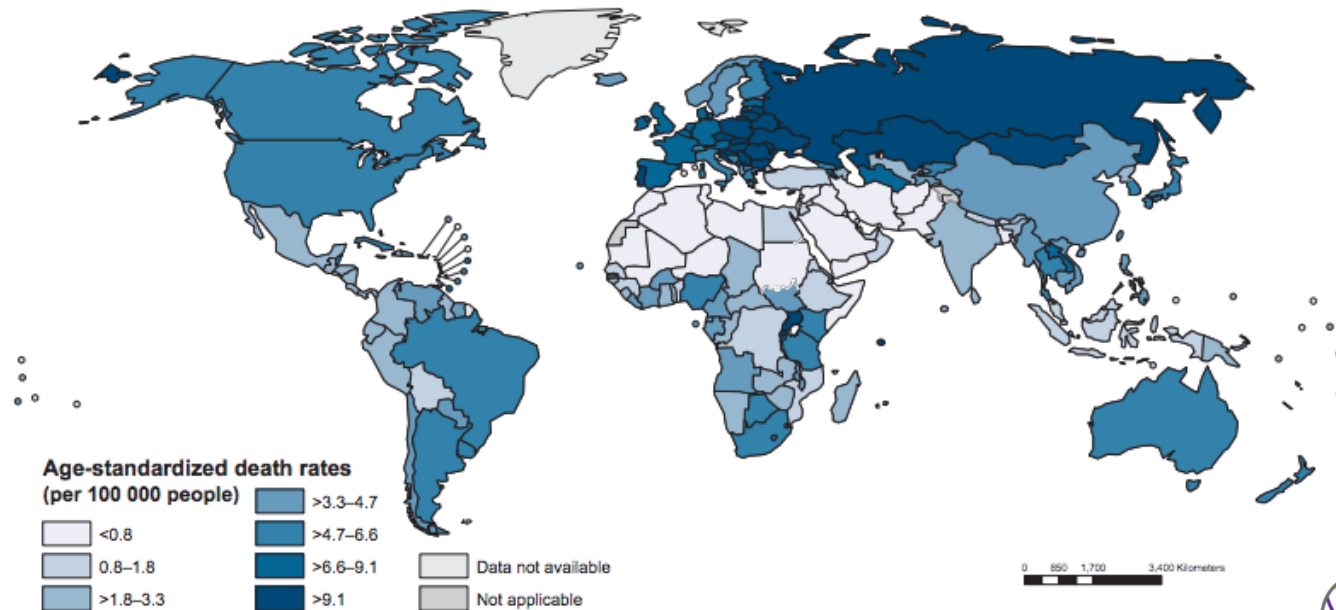


© WHO 2018. All rights reserved.



# Global Trends

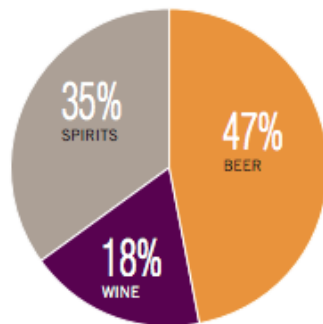
**Figure 4.8** Global age-standardized alcohol-attributable malignant neoplasm death rates, 2016



# USA Drinking Trends

Recorded alcohol per capita (15+) consumption (in litres of pure alcohol) by type of alcoholic beverage, 2016 or latest year available

- Beer
- Wine
- Spirits
- Other
- All



Total alcohol per capita (15+) consumption, drinkers only (in litres of pure alcohol), 2016

	Litres
Males (15+)	19.0
Females (15+)	6.7
Both sexes (15+)	13.7

Age-standardized death rates (ASDR) and alcohol-attributable fractions (AAF), 2016

	ASDR*		AAF (%)		AAD** (Number)
Liver cirrhosis, males / females	19.7	10.0	74.1	59.2	34 240
Road traffic injuries, males / females	20.3	7.9	42.5	25.0	14 246
Cancer, males / females	178.3	133.9	7.0	2.6	30 859

\*Per 100 000 population (15+); \*\*alcohol-attributable deaths, both sexes.

# POLICIES & INTERVENTIONS AT THE STATE AND NATIONAL LEVELS

Written national policy (adopted/revised) / National action plan	Yes (2011/2012) / Yes	National maximum legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) when driving a vehicle (general / young / professional), in %	0.08 / 0.00-0.02 / 0.04
Excise tax on beer / wine / spirits	Yes / Yes / Yes	Legally binding regulations on alcohol advertising / product placement (any)	No / No 
 National legal minimum age for off-premise sales of alcoholic beverages (beer / wine / spirits)	21 / 21 / 21	Legally binding regulations on alcohol sponsorship / sales promotion (any)	sub-national
 National legal minimum age for on-premise sales of alcoholic beverages (beer / wine / spirits)	21 / 21 / 21	Legally required health warning labels on alcohol advertisements / containers (any)	No / Yes 
Restrictions for on-/off-premise sales of alcoholic beverages (any):		National government support for community action (any)	Yes
Hours, days / places, density	sub-national	National monitoring system(s) (any)	Yes
Specific events / intoxicated persons / petrol stations	sub-national		

# Community Guide Recommendations for Preventing Excessive Drinking

Increase alcohol taxes	
Regulate alcohol outlet density	
Dram shop (commercial host) liability	
Privatization of alcohol sales	
Maintain limits on days of sale	
Maintain limits on hours of sale	
Enhance enforcement of laws prohibiting alcohol sales to minors	

# Questions?

[mgibson@publicstrategies.org](mailto:mgibson@publicstrategies.org)

---



**INSTITUTE FOR  
PUBLIC  
STRATEGIES**

*The Binge and Underage Drinking Initiative is funded by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency.*