



ISSUP KENYA WEBINAR WOMEN AND ALCOHOL USE

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Prevalence of Drinking: According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) in the US, 85.6 percent of people ages 18 and older reported that they drank alcohol at some point in their lifetime, 69.5 percent reported that they drank in the past year, and 54.9 percent (59.1 percent of men in this age group and **51.0 percent of women in this age group**) reported that they drank in the past month.

(SAMHSA: 2019, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality)





WHY WOMEN?

For women the risk factors for AUD is higher:

1. Women who have eight or more drinks a week or have four or more drinks at one time while for men it is 15 alcoholic drinks a week or frequently have five or more drinks at one time
2. In our African context self esteem issues occasioned by cultural dynamics may predispose women to alcohol use more than men.



Further we note:

1. In most African countries including Kenya, Women are increasingly assuming the role of the main bread winner leading to increased stress related dynamics.
2. In 2016 of the 3 million deaths attributable to alcohol consumption which translates to 5.3 percent of all global deaths ; 2.6 percent of this fatalities were women
3. **Sexual function and menstruation.** In women, Alcohol can interrupt menstruation.

EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL IN WOMEN

- **Birth defects.** If you drink excessively during pregnancy, your child may be born with fetal alcohol syndrome. This condition results in birth defects including a small head, heart defects, a shortening of the eyelids and various other abnormalities. As these children grow older, they may have various developmental disabilities

EFFECTS CONTINUED

PREVALENCE HIGH IN WOMEN USING ALCOHOL FOR

- Domestic abuse and divorce
- High risk sexual behaviors
- Multiple sexual partners
- Unprotected sexual intercourse
- Sex with high risk–risk partners (e.g., injection drug users, commercial sex workers)
- Exchange of sex for money or favors

SPECIFIC CONCERNS

- Exposure to alcohol in the womb can lead to **FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME**, the number one preventable cause of mental impairment
- Inside the developing fetus, the embryonic cells that will eventually form the brain are multiplying and forming connections. Alcohol exposure in the womb can damage these cells, impairing the development of several structures in the brain, including the basal ganglia (responsible for spatial memory and other cognitive functions), the cerebellum (involved in balance and coordination) and the corpus callosum (aids communication between the right and left halves of the brain).

- When babies are exposed to alcohol in the womb at any stage of pregnancy, they have more difficulty later in life with learning, memory and attention.
- Many are also born with a smaller-than-normal head and facial abnormalities. Because researchers don't know exactly how much alcohol a mother has to drink to cause harm, Doctors recommends that pregnant women abstain from drinking alcohol during pregnancy



- A. Alcohol dependent pregnant mothers also face the possibilities of a difficult labour.**
- B. For women there is a high possibility of **Loss of Friends, Family or Job especially within our Kenyan local context** . This arise due a tendency for anti-social behavior which causes their friends to avoid them.**
- C. Women are affected by alcohol more rapidly because they tend to have a higher proportion of body fat than men, so they absorb up to nearly 30% more alcohol into their bloodstream than men of the same height and weight who drink the same amount of alcohol.**



RESEARCH FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES INDICATE:

- Women develop alcohol-induced liver disease over a shorter period of time and after consuming less alcohol than men.
- Women who drink and drive are at greater risk than men for fatal accidents at the same blood alcohol concentration.
- About 40 percent of women (and men) who begin drinking before age 15 will be diagnosed as alcohol dependent at some time during their life.

AND FINALLY THAT.....

- ❖ Women who were sexually or physically abused as children are more likely to have alcohol dependence problems as adults.
- ❖ Increased alcohol consumption is directly related to increased diagnosis of breast cancer.
- ❖ Heavy drinking causes brain shrinkage in both men and women but happens more rapidly in women.
- ❖ Alcohol-dependent women are nearly five times more likely to attempt suicide than women who don't drink.

QUESTIONS?

ISSUP INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF SUBSTANCE USE PROFESSIONALS
KENYA chapter 

Thank you!



THANK YOU