

# [Mexican american males and alcoholism](https://assignbuster.com/mexican-american-males-and-alcoholism/)

(Zimmerman and Roysircar 1993). Regardless of what the situation is, it does not free them of alcoholism. A Mexican American male that is close to his Mexican traditions and culture is likely to engage in excessive alcohol consumption because this behavior has been shaped by the learned cultural expectations (Gilbert and Cervantes 1987). It is crucial to understand the cultural reference that alcohol represents in the Mexican culture and that it can easily transmitted from generation to generation.

Having that said, it is fair to say that males who migrated to the United Stated during their adolescent ears and older were already shaped by the customs of Mexico (Gilbert and Cervantes 1987). Perhaps a better way to understand why Mexicans or Mexican Americans inherit vulnerability to fall into alcoholism is to look into permissiveness in the culture. Introduction to alcohol in a male's life occurs early on, therefore promoting the use of alcohol Oacobs 1981). Little or no supervision during constant alcohol consumption also leads to the continuance of this behavior generation to generation.

Lastly, access to alcohol in Mexico is not a difficult obstacle to overcome. Therefore, males who migrated to the U. S. have already been heavily exposed to alcohol. These points are not to prove that alcoholism among Mexican American men is caused entirely by the exposure of Mexico's customs, but to outline the different reasons why a male might fall in alcoholism. A male who migrates to the U. S. or a Mexican American male that has lived most or his entire life in the U. S. as mentioned before, might engage in excessive drinking because of the pressures of acculturation.

Dealing with the stress of leaving behind natal customs to adapt new values and behaviors can result heavy alcohol consumption. Even though the Mexican culture has already shaped the behavior of drinking in males, it is still different from the American drinking behaviors. Mexican men drink less frequently, but more heavily, while Americans drink more frequently, but not so heavily (Gilbert and Cervantes 1987). Clearly a combination of both as a form of dealing with stress can be catastrophic. During the acculturation process the greatest amount of stress can be felt when the feeling of loneliness starts to settle in.

When a male feels he is distanced from his Mexican culture and life style, but not ccepted by the new dominant culture he has been trying to adapt, he is more susceptive to alcoholism (Zimmerman and Roysircar 1993). While trying to cope with the adaptation of a new identity, Mexican American males also have several socio-demographic factors that add to their alcoholism vulnerability. Income has been linked to excessive alcohol consumption among populations that struggle to sustain a liable income (Rivera 1984). Therefore it is very likely that many Mexican American males seek consolation of their financial worries in alcohol.

Keeping in mind the idea of machismo it is also likely that males seek consolation for their failure to fulfill all of their masculine roles. In this case it would be to be a stable breadwinner for the family or himself. Moving on, proficiency in speaking the English language is also crucial for the adjustment process (Rivera 1984). Speaking only Spanish and not being able to efficiently communicate with others can cause traumatic stress that can very well lead into alcoholism. Lastly, legal status in the U. S. can also cause stress that can lead to alcohol abuse.

It is not ncommon for males to migrate alone to the U. S. to work and leave his family behind in Mexico. This situation can lead the male to abuse drinking in order to fill his loneliness. The reasons why Mexican American males recur to alcoholism as a form of consolation or habitual behavior, they have been accustomed to vary. Regardless it can be concluded that the way in which the two factors of drinking for consolation and drinking because of habit play out differently depending on the level of acculturation, and socio-economic factors.

In both situations the role of machismo in ales can prevent them from receiving the proper help required to deal with alcoholism. It is almost as if they have self medicated their problems and worries, and alcohol is the solution. Admitting to an alcoholism problem would mean failure to live up to their masculine role. Citations Gilbert, M. Jean and Cervantes, Richard C. Mexican Americans and Alcohol. Los Angeles, CA : Spanish Speaking Mental Health Research Center. 1987. Jacobs, Rosevelt. A Study of Drinking Behavior and Personality Characteristics of Three Ethnic Groups.

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