

Health behavior interview part 1

[Health & Medicine](#), [Alcoholism](#)



Health Behavior Interview — Part 1 The health behavior I've chosen to research is heavy episodic drinking, also known as binge drinking. The definition of episodic drinking according to the World Health Organization (2013) is the consumption of at least 60 grams or more of pure alcohol on at least one occasion in the past seven days. Heavy Episodic Drinking, HED, is considered one of the leading indicators for accidents related to alcohol use. The WHO (2013) also notes that worldwide there are about 1.5% of drinkers who participate in a weekly episodic drinking occurrence. Due to a larger population of men than women worldwide, men are disproportionately affected by episodic drinking. Men are found to be four times as likely as women to have a weekly episode of binge drinking. However, there seems to be a bigger problem surrounding women and girls who are episodic drinkers. According to the CDC (2013) one in eight women binge drink, increasing their risk for many health issues such as breast cancer, heart disease, sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancy. The CDC publishes an annual report known as Vital Signs which contains information about the growing problem of episodic drinking. In their latest report they found that about 14 million women in the United States binge drink at least 3 times a month and consume about 6 drinks per binge. The definition of binge drinking for women as defined by the CDC (2013) is consuming 4 or more alcoholic drinks on one occasion. The issue of episodic drinking is most prevalent among women regardless of the life threatening affects and associated health problems. Binge drinking has been found to be most common however, in high school aged girls and young women. The largest population of young women whom are episodic drinkers is among white and

Hispanic females within the group of household incomes falling around \$75,000 and up (CDC, 2013). Not only does frequent alcohol use pose major health risks for young people, but it also can result in permanent damage to areas of the brain such as the pre frontal cortex (National Institutes of Health, 2008). The overall problem and reasons regarding why episodic drinking is of more concern for young females rather than males are due to the higher amount of risks found with female binge drinkers. The female body reacts differently to alcohol than the male body. Women's bodies process alcohol differently and they are typically smaller in size and weight than men. Most health behaviors are influenced by an individual's physical and social environment. A high rate of episodic drinking found within a community could be linked to a higher availability of alcohol and at low prices. Also, underage drinking such as what is seen among high school girls is said to be a result of alcohol advertising and marketing. All children and adolescents are influenced by what they see in the behaviors of adults and their parents, so if episodic drinking occurs in the home or around the child it is increasing the probability of the child drinking at a young age or becoming a binge drinking in adulthood. Reference List Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). Binge drinking: a serious, under-recognized problem among women and girls. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). Vital signs: binge drinking (January Edition). Atlanta, GA: CDC. <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/bingedrinkingfemale/index.html> National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2007). The science of addiction (NIH Pub No. 07-5605). National Institutes of Health. www.drugabuse.gov Health Behavior Interview Part II:

Drinker (A) a. How old were you when you started this behavior? Socially at 17 b. Describe the factors that influenced you starting this behavior, or NOT starting it. Friends " they were doing it so why not try it? Plus it was usually free" c. What are the factors that keep you engaged in this behavior, or NOT engaged in this behavior? It's a coping mechanism for getting through the night and relieving the stresses of the day. d. How frequently do you engage in this behavior in the past week, two weeks, 30 days, six months? (N/A for those who do not engage in the behavior) Typically 5-6 nights a week; " Sometimes only 1 or 2 drinks and sometimes more if I go out with friends, family, etc. " e. What would it take for you to change this behavior? " It would take a serious incident for me to stop drinking, something life/health threatening or just a health issue in general or a legal issue/incident" f. Do you expect to be engaged in this behavior in the next six months? Yes

Drinker (B) a. Started drinking at age 21. b. " I was influenced to start drinking with my friends; never had an interest before they were all doing it too so that's when I started. " c. " I've never had a reason to quit drinking so that's why I still drink. Plus it's something to do with my friends and I enjoy relaxing and having some drinks. " d. " I'm a part time and full time fire fighter and paramedic for two different cities so I work a lot but I'd say I drink about 3 nights a week usually. " e. " I'd quit drinking for my job or my health. I'd like to cut back to save some money and get in better shape though too. " f. Yes.

Drinker (C) a. " First few times I drank with my friends I was 15 years old. " b. " I started drinking with my friends on the weekends; a lot of my friends in high school were older than me so it was always available and around. " c. " I enjoy drinking and the way it makes me feel plus it's

something I do with my friends a lot. I like to unwind after a long day of work with a few glasses of wine. " d. " I would say I drink about 6 out of 7 nights a week. Sometimes it's only like one glass of wine then other times it'll be more depending on what I'm doing or my mood. " e. " I would stop drinking if there was an issue with my health that required me to stop drinking or if I ever felt that my drinking was getting out of hand I hope I'd be smart enough to stop before it got worse. " f. Yes. Non-Drinker (D) a. " I've never drank a lot so I couldn't really tell you when exactly I ' started' but I know I never drank when I was young or underage. " b. " I was never interested in drinking because when I was young a friend of mine lost a sibling to a car accident with a drunk driver and I saw the devastation it caused and I never forgot it. " c. " I've never engaged in the behavior regularly because I've never wanted to. I've seen plenty of people get out of control with their drinking and have seen lives changed forever by alcohol. Not to mention it is horrible for your health. " d. N/A e. " I don't think I'll ever pick up a drinking habit or just pick up drinking at all. I'd imagine something absolutely horrible would have to happen before I would turn to self destruction and begin drinking. " f. No. Non-Drinker (E) a. " The first time I drank was in high school I was about 18. " b. " I drank because my boyfriend at the time was drinking so I figured I'd do it too but I hated it because I got sick and had an awful time. " c. " After the first time I experienced using alcohol and had a horrible time I was never really interested in it again. I'll have a glass of champagne at weddings and what not but otherwise I'm usually the sober one at the party. " d. N/A e. I don't think I'll ever start really drinking... I would have to ease into it with like a glass or two of wine a week and see how it goes. " f. Most

likely not. Non-Drinker (F) a. " The first time I had a drink I was very, very young but it was by accident I picked up my mother's gin and tonic and took a big sip! But officially you could say I was drinking every so often by the age of 14 because it wasn't that big of a deal back then. " b. " I was influenced by watching my parents, aunts, uncles, and older siblings all drink and play cards on some nights of the week while I did homework so I thought it was just something that ' grown-ups' did. " c. " After a while of experimenting and trying to be an ' adult' and drink I soon realized it was nothing I found to be all that special and just sort of forgot about it and moved on with my life. Now-a-days, if I had a penny for every time I drank this year I would probably have less than five cents. " d. " Maybe once every six months on a special occasion. " e. " I doubt I'd ever change; especially now since I am older and need to preserve what health I have left! " f. " Doubtful. " Out of all the responses from my six interviewees I found that the biggest similarity was that alcohol and drinking are mostly seen as a social behavior. The biggest influence on most of the people was their friends and the people they surround themselves with. There was only one person that said their drinking was " experimental" and mostly influenced by what they had seen and do see occur in their home. For the drinkers, they all had the common answer of their health being a reason why they would stop drinking and they all said they drink because they enjoy it. I asked very few personal questions, but I did pick up on a sense that it seemed like the people with a somewhat higher income drank just as much as those with a lower income but they seemed to drink more because of wanting to relax than drinking to be social. Only one of the non-drinkers said they have chosen not to drink because of a

traumatic experience and one is a non-drinker because of becoming ill after the first time they drank alcohol. It seems that people are either consumed by the desire to drink or they find it uninteresting altogether. I was both surprised and not surprised at the same time when it came to the ages of the six people of which they started drinking. Only one person started drinking at the legal age to drink while all the other started in their teen years. All the people I chose to interview were cooperative and helpful. I chose people of all different ages who all happen to live in the same county so their generalized lifestyles are relatively close to one another. I believe everyone answered the questions I asked honestly. After speaking with them for even just a short time, I could somewhat feel what their personalities were really like so their responses seemed more accurate based on the way they presented themselves.