



Background

Consuming alcohol while pregnant at any amount, or at any frequency, can be harmful to the baby. There is no amount of alcohol that has been found to be safe for mothers during pregnancy.¹ There is an increased risk for adverse health outcomes from consuming alcohol while pregnant. These include impaired growth of the fetus, stillbirth, and fetal alcohol syndrome.² Pregnant women who continue to drink alcohol, are more likely to use tobacco or marijuana, and they are more likely to be sufferers of a mental health disorder.³ Alcohol consumption and pregnancy has been studied for decades, yet, a good numbers of moms still drink while pregnant, with most drinking being done in the first trimester and tapering off as the pregnancy continues. Healthcare providers and support communities need more tools to convey to moms the risks of any drinking while pregnant to the unborn baby.

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

PRAMS is a survey which collects site-specific, population-based data on maternal attitudes, behaviors, and experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy.

Phase 9 of the PRAMS survey began in 2023, and some alcohol consumption related questions were changed. PRAMS no longer collects pre-pregnancy drinking data and data about drinking during pregnancy can be separated by trimester.

Alcohol Consumption Before and During, 2021 - 2023 ♦

| PRAMS Indicator | Virginia % (95% Confidence Interval) † | | |
|---|---|------------------|-----------------|
| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
| Alcohol Consumption Before Pregnancy | 88.7 (84.6-92.8) | 85.3 (80.7-89.8) | * |
| Alcohol Consumption During Pregnancy | 11.2 (7.3-15.1) | 8.6 (5.3-11.8) | 11.0 (7.3-14.8) |

♦Among women with a recent live birth who reported drinking alcohol

† Weighted Percentage (95% Confidence Interval)

*Not collected in PRAMS phase 9 (2023-present)

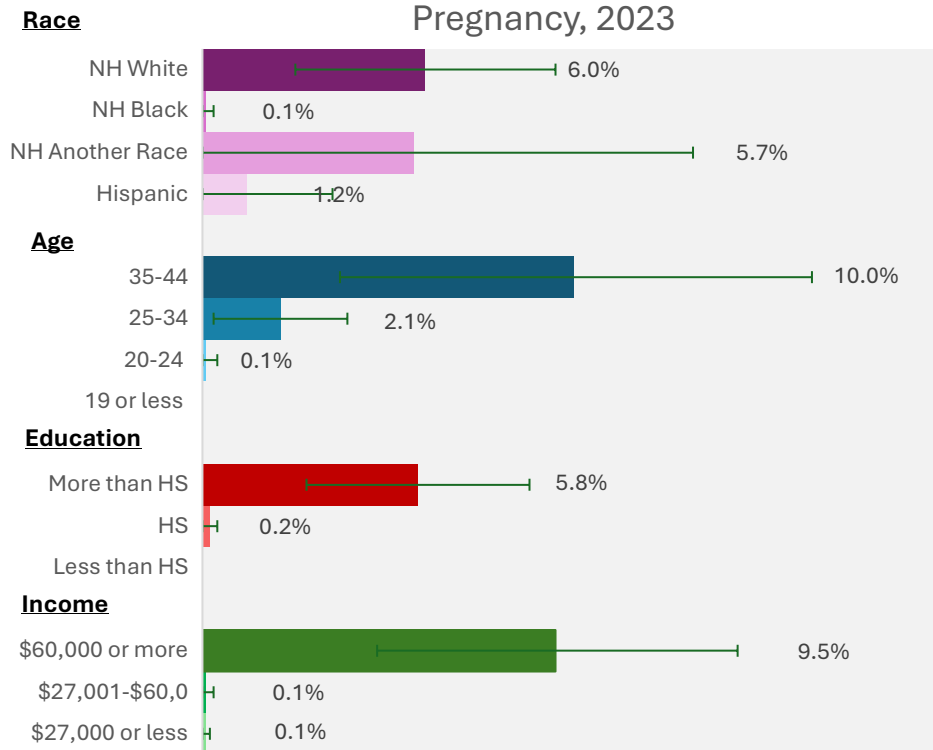
In 2023, 4% of women drank alcohol in their 2nd or 3rd trimester.

Alcohol Consumption National Goals

| | |
|---|---|
| Healthy People 2030 Objectives ⁵ | Increase abstinence from alcohol among pregnant women |
| | Reduce the proportion of people who had alcohol use disorder in the past year |

Virginia PRAMS: Alcohol Consumption, 2023

Characteristics of Who Consumed Alcohol During Pregnancy, 2023



Non-Hispanic Another Race includes NH Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, and other reported races
‡ < 30 respondents; may not be reliable
Note: Bars display 95% Confidence Intervals

Summary

In 2023, 88% of Virginia mothers were asked about drinking alcohol during a prenatal care appointment. This was down from 94% in 2022.

1 out of 20 women reported drinking in the 2nd or 3rd trimester in 2023.

Race, age, education, nor income were protective factors as it relates to alcohol consumption during pregnancy. Women in the higher age, income, and education categories, reported drinking more than those in the respective lower categories.

Resources

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/tobacco-free-living/quit-now-virginia/>

[About Electronic Cigarettes and Vaping](#)

References

- <https://vdhweb.vdh.virginia.gov/family-health-services/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/ninja-forms/9/Virginia-Womens-Health-and-Alcohol-Use-2016-2017.pdf>
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- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Alcohol's Effects on Health-Research-based information on drinking and its impact. *Understanding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders*. December 2025
- National Center for Health Statistics. https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy_people/hp2030/hp2030.htm



To learn more about Virginia PRAMS and to see other data visit:
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/prams/>



THE BEST SOURCE OF DATA ON MOTHERS AND BABIES