# Stability and change in women's alcohol consumption: Factors related to alcohol consumption in women from the women's health Australia study

## Researchers

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## Summary

This project aims to determine change in consumption over time, and to identify the factors that affect levels and changes of consumption over time, and differences between age groups, using secondary analysis of data taken from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health; a population-based survey that has been examining the health and wellbeing of more than 40,000 Australian women since 1996. This project surveys three cohorts of Australian women who were aged 18-23, 45-50, and 70-75 when the study began in 1996. No primary data was collected. This study focuses on the youngest and mid-aged cohorts.

## Outcomes

It was found that younger women were least likely to abstain from alcohol consumption with 9% abstaining in the youngest cohort, 15% abstaining in the mid-aged cohort, and 34% abstaining in the oldest cohort. Younger women consumed alcohol at the highest quantities, while older women consumed at the highest frequency.

Less than 6% of women in any cohort were drinking at levels associated with risk in the long-term, but alcohol consumption at short-term risky levels was exhibited by a large proportion of respondents in the youngest and mid-aged cohorts.

The main factors influencing a reduction in short term risky drinking were an improvement in mental health status, and major positive life changes such as getting married or having a child.

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