# The association between alcohol beverage types and consumption

## Researchers

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## Summary

The purpose of this project was to analyse data from the 2007 National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS) in order to examine the relationship between types of alcoholic beverages and patterns of consumption across population groups, with a specific focus on the consumption of pre-mixed or ready-to-drink beverages (RTDs).

The NDSHS is undertaken every three years. The 2007 dataset included information from 22 887 Australians aged 14 years and older. The analysis sorted the data according to two main criteria: drinking frequency (frequent or infrequent) and potential for short term harms (low-risk or risky), using the 2009 NHMRC guidelines.

The project studied patterns of consumption of different alcoholic beverages by gender and age group in order to determine whether particular population groups consume specific beverage types at levels associated with risks for alcohol-related harm, particularly short-term harms, such as injuries caused by accidents or assaults.

## Outcomes

This study found that RTDs were one of the main beverages of choice for young people, especially for those who drank heavily and frequently. Bottled spirits and regular strength beer were also consumed by the largest proportion of risky drinkers across all age groups. Males of all ages who drank at risky levels usually drank regular strength beer. In contrast, female risky drinkers younger than 25 years usually drank RTDs or bottled spirits, and those over 25 years of age usually drank bottled wine.

While most Australians who drank alcoholic beverages did so at low risk for short term alcohol-related harm, almost 15% of frequent drinkers and over 30% of infrequent drinkers drank at risky levels. Of those who drank at risky levels, the most commonly consumed beverage types were regular strength beer, bottled spirits, bottled wine, and RTDs. Young people aged 14 to 24 years were most likely to consume alcohol at risky levels.

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