

Major depression-binge drinking link seen

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Binge drinking may be more common in people experiencing major depression, especially women, a Canadian study said.

In a telephone poll of 14,000 men and women, researchers said they were told that bingeing was more likely among people suffering major depression, WebMD.com said. Of those polled, about 10 percent of the women and nearly 6 percent of the men reported symptoms that met the criteria for major depression, researchers said.

Binge drinking is defined as consuming at least five alcoholic beverages in one sitting.

The study was led by Kathryn Graham of the University of Western Ontario psychology department. It was published in the January issue of *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*.

"Depression is most strongly related to a pattern of binge drinking," Graham said in a release. "A pattern of frequent but low quantity drinking is not associated with depression."

It wasn't clear whether a major depression led to binge drinking, or vice versa, Graham said. Also, other factors could have played a role in bingeing.

Past studies on depression and drinking yielded mixed results, Graham noted. She and her colleagues call for more research on alcohol and depression.

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