

One in four older adults not asked about alcohol use

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(HealthDay)—More than one-quarter of older adults who use alcohol are

not asked about their drinking by their physician, according to a study published online July 29 in *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*.

Pia M. Mauro, Ph.D., from Columbia University in New York City, and colleagues used the 2015 to 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health to identify 9,663 U.S. adults (≥ 65 years of age) who used alcohol and had a past-year health care encounter. Gender differences in the prevalence of alcohol screening and discussions with health care providers were assessed.

The researchers found that 24.68 percent of men and 27.04 percent of women reported no alcohol screening or discussions. Men were more likely than women to be questioned about drinking frequency, amount, or problems related to drinking. Women were 22 percent more likely to report alcohol screening only but were 18 percent less likely to discuss alcohol with providers than men. The odds of reporting alcohol discussions were lower among women (adjusted odds ratio, 0.67) versus any alcohol screening only compared with men.

"Given the [increased risk](#) for harms of [alcohol use](#) with aging, older adults should be screened and counseled regarding their alcohol use," the authors write.

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