

# Men bearing the brunt of alcohol-related injury and death in Australia

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Of the 1,950 alcohol-related injury deaths and 30,000 hospitalizations in 2019–20, more than 1,500 (78%) and almost 18,000 (59%) were among males, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

(AIHW).

"[Alcohol-related injury: hospitalizations and deaths, 2019–20](#)" by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare shows the leading causes for alcohol-related [injury](#) deaths among [males](#) were suicide (48%), accidental poisoning (23%) and transport (12%). For females, suicide (43%), accidental poisoning (33%) and falls (9%) were the leading causes.

"Overall, these accounted for 5.7% of all injury hospitalizations and 14% of the 13,400 injury deaths among Australians. However, this is likely an underestimate, previous research has shown the presence of alcohol is often not included in a patient's records."

"Most injury events are preventable, but the consumption of alcohol can increase the risk of injury. Today's report includes injury cases where alcohol may have been wholly responsible for the injury (for example, [alcohol poisoning](#)) or partially responsible (such as falls or intentional self-harm injury)," said AIHW spokesperson Dr. Heather Swanston.

While the leading causes of alcohol-related injury hospitalizations were the same for males and females, there were some notable differences. Among males falls accounted for 43% of injuries, followed by intentional self-harm (17%), assault (14%) and transport (9%). For females, falls represented 35% of alcohol-related hospitalizations, followed by intentional self-harm (33%), assault (15%), transport (4%).

The majority of alcohol-related injury hospitalizations occurred in the 45–49 (1,641, 9%) and 20–24 (1,629, 9%) [age groups](#) for males, and in the 45–49 (1,386, 11%) age group for females.

"There were 20% fewer alcohol-related injury hospitalizations during April 2020—a period affected by COVID-19 lockdowns—compared to

the same month the previous year. However, as COVID-19 related restrictions eased, alcohol-related injury hospital admissions had returned to pre-pandemic levels by June 2020," Dr. Swanston said.

The rate of deaths from alcohol-related injuries in Australia more than doubled between 2010–11 and 2019–20, increasing from 4.8 to 9.7 deaths per 100,000 (840 compared to 1,950 deaths). However, alcohol-related [injury deaths](#) decreased by 10% between 2018–19 and 2019–20, the period affected by COVID-19 lockdowns.

Dr. Swanston noted that some groups were more likely to experience higher rates of alcohol-related injury hospitalizations.

Very remote areas of Australia had the highest rates of alcohol-related injury hospitalizations, more than 8 times the national rate and almost 11 times the rate for people living in Major cities. Those living in the lowest of five socioeconomic areas were more than twice as likely to be hospitalized for an alcohol-related injury than those in the highest socioeconomic area.

The databases used to conduct this research do not include information on cases where a person was treated in an [emergency department](#) or by a general or allied health practitioner and was not admitted to the hospital. Alcohol consumption in this analysis relates to the person injured.

Provided by Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)

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