

Barry-Eaton District Health Department
Caring for the Community Since the 1930's

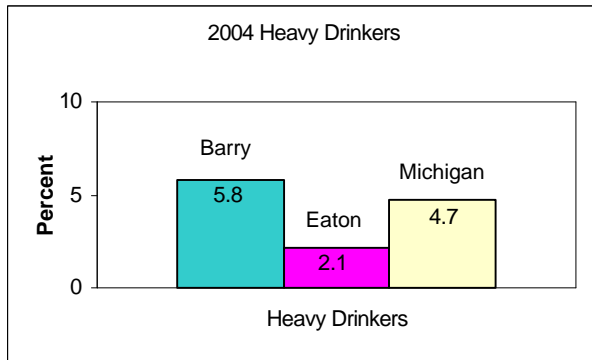
Focus on Alcohol Misuse

April 2006

HealthWatch

Barry County Eaton County

How Many Heavy Drinkers?



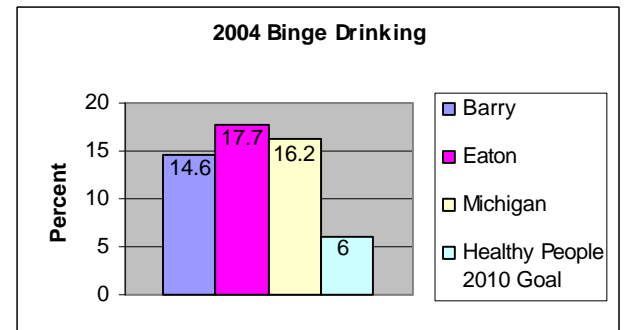
People that drink more than 2 drinks a day are "heavy drinkers". Heavy drinkers are at a higher risk of alcohol dependence or alcohol abuse. Based on a 2004 survey of adults, Barry County has a slightly higher percentage of heavy drinkers (5.8%) than the Michigan percentage (4.7%), while Eaton County has a lower rate of 2.1%. A lower percentage of heavy drinkers may indicate a healthier community, as alcohol misuse has both personal and community effects.

"Heavy drinking can increase the risk for certain cancers, especially those of the liver, esophagus, throat, and larynx (voice box). Heavy drinking can also cause liver cirrhosis, immune system problems, brain damage, and harm to the fetus during pregnancy. In addition, drinking increases the risk of death from automobile crashes as well as recreational and on-the-job injuries."

NIH Publication No. 96-4153

Binge Drinking – A Lot At Once

Binge drinking is drinking more than 4 drinks (for females) or 5 drinks (for males) at one sitting. The percentage of adults who binge drank in both Barry County (14.6%) and Eaton County (17.7%) are significantly higher than the Healthy People 2010 goal of 6%. Binge drinking carries most of the same risks as habitual heavy drinking, and an increased risk of unsafe sexual behaviors and unintentional fetal alcohol exposure.



It's smart to limit your drinking to less than 1 drink per day!

Take Action

For Information about AA and Alanon: (517) 377-1444
 Eaton County Substance Abuse Program: (517) 543-2580
 Barry County Substance Abuse Services: (269) 945-1387

Internet Websites we recommend: www.smartrecovery.org www.alcoholic-anonymous.org www.niaaa.nih.gov

Need more information on Alcohol Awareness in Barry or Eaton County? Want to have a speaker address Alcohol Awareness in your group? Interested in learning about programs and services to promote the public health? Contact the Health Department's Health Educator, Heather Sanders at (517) 541-2691

This publication was prepared by Anne Barna, Community Health Assessment Coordinator for the Barry-Eaton District Health Department. For assistance in using this or other health data in your organization, please call Anne at (517) 541-2694.