

THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTIFYING AND TREATING ALCOHOL USE DISORDER

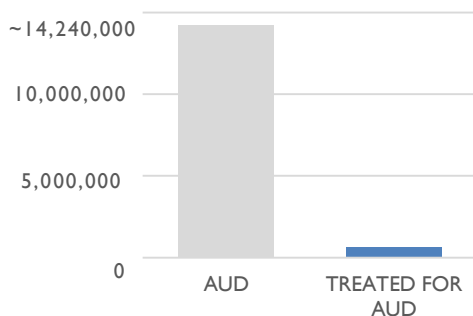


Alcohol consumption is the **third leading cause of preventable death in the US.**¹



In 2010, the **cost of excessive drinking in the United States was \$249 billion.**²

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a chronic brain disorder that is characterized by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use despite adverse social, occupational, or health consequences.³



ALCOHOL USE DISORDER OFTEN GOES UNTREATED

ONLY 4% OF US ADULTS WHO NEEDED TREATMENT, RECEIVED IT. Over an estimated 14 million adults had AUD in 2018, and an estimated 641,000 received treatment.⁴

Medications coupled with counseling can be an effective treatment for AUD.^{5,6} Policymakers should support access and funding for the screening and option of treatment of alcohol use disorders with counseling and FDA-approved medications.

“Current evidence shows that medications are underused in the treatment of alcohol use disorder, including...dependence. This is of concern because of the high prevalence of alcohol problems in the general population. For example, data show that an estimated 10 percent to 20 percent of patients seen in primary care or hospital settings have a diagnosable alcohol use disorder.”⁷



A retrospective analysis of commercial insurance claims of a large US health plan in 2005-2009, found that total healthcare cost was 30% lower for alcohol-dependent patients treated with medications and counseling compared to those who were not.⁸

1. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Alcohol Facts and Statistics. <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets/alcohol-facts-and-statistics>. Accessed June 10, 2020. 2. American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 2010 National and State Costs of Excessive Alcohol Consumption. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2015.05.031>, Published October 01, 2015. Accessed July 6, 2020. 3. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Alcohol Use Disorder. Access July 20, 2020 at: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/overview-alcohol-consumption/alcohol-use-disorders>. 4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2017-2018 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health: Model-based Estimated Totals, Accessed July 20, 2020 at: <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt23259/NSDUHsaeTotals2018/NSDUHsaeTotals2018.pdf>. 5. O'Malley, S.S., and O'Connor, P.G. Medications for unhealthy alcohol use: Across the spectrum. Alcohol Research & Health 33(4): Page 300. 2011. 6. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Medication for the Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorder: A Brief Guide. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4907. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015. Page 2. <https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma15-4907.pdf>. 7. Id 2. Page 1. 8. Baser O, Chalk M, Rawson R, Gastfriend DR. Alcohol dependence treatments: comprehensive healthcare costs, utilization outcomes, and pharmacotherapy persistence. Am J Manag Care. 2011;17(8 suppl):S222-S234.