

The 2023 CAMH MONITOR eREPORT

Executive Summary

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's *CAMH Monitor* is the longest ongoing population survey of adult substance use and mental health in Canada. The study, which spans 47 years, consists of 37 repeated cross-sectional surveys among adults aged 18 and older across Ontario, conducted between 1977 and 2023.

This summary presents the estimates of substance use, mental health and well-being indicators among Ontario adults in the 2022 and 2023 surveys. It also compares estimates of substance use and mental health indicators from 2023 to those from five years (2018) and ten years (2013) ago.

Substance Use, Mental Health & Well-Being Indicators, 2022/2023 CAMH Monitor

Indicator	2022 (n=2,650)			2023 (n=2590)		
	T %	M %	W %	T %	M %	W %
Alcohol						
Percentage drinking alcohol - past 12 months	80.4	82.1	78.8	78.3	78.4	78.3
Percentage drinking daily - total sample	9.2	11.3	7.3 *	8.0	10.2	6.1 *
- among drinkers	11.4	13.8	9.2	10.3	13.2	7.9 *
Percentage consuming 5 or more drinks on a single occasion weekly (weekly binge drinking)						
- total sample	10.7	15.1	6.8 *	8.9	13.1	5.2 *
- among drinkers	13.3	18.4	8.6 *	11.4	16.8	6.7 *
Percentage reporting hazardous or harmful drinking (AUDIT 8+)						
- total sample	20.1	25.7	15.0 *	18.9	22.4	15.9 *
- among drinkers	25.3	31.6	19.3 *	24.6	29.3	20.6 *
Percentage reporting symptoms of alcohol dependence (based on the AUDIT) - total sample	14.1	18.0	10.7 *	12.8	13.6 [†]	12.0
Tobacco						
Percentage currently smoking cigarettes	17.7	19.9	15.7 *	18.0	20.5	15.8 *
Daily smoking	12.3	12.9	11.8	12.5	13.4	11.7
Percentage of daily smokers reporting high nicotine dependence - among daily smokers	9.4	8.7	10.1	8.8	9.8	7.8
Percentage reporting electronic cigarette use - past 12 months	13.7	17.0	10.7 *	16.0[†]	17.3	14.9 [†]
Percentage reporting electronic cigarette use - past 30 days	8.2	10.9	5.7 *	11.5[†]	12.7	10.4 [†]
Cannabis						
Percentage using cannabis in lifetime	54.1	56.9	51.7 *	52.1	51.1 [†]	52.9
Percentage using cannabis - past 12 months	32.9	35.7	30.3 *	31.3	30.5 [†]	32.1
Percentage using cannabis - past 3 months	28.0	32.0	24.4 *	25.8	26.6	25.1
Percentage using cannabis – daily in the past 3 months	7.9	7.8	8.1	8.6	9.0	8.2
Percentage reporting moderate to high risk of cannabis use problems (ASSIST-CIS 4+) in the past 3 months						
- total sample	19.4	23.3	16.2 *	16.7	17.9 [†]	15.7
- among users	64.4	73.0	56.5 *	56.7[†]	61.8 [†]	52.4
Percentage using cannabis for medical purposes - past 12 months -total sample	14.2	13.7	14.7	13.0	12.1	13.7
Cocaine						
Percentage using cocaine in lifetime	15.1	17.2	13.1 *	14.0	16.4	11.9 *
Percentage using cocaine - past 12 months	3.0	4.0	2.1 *	3.7	4.3	3.2

Indicator	2022 (n=2,650)			2023 (n=2590)		
	T %	M %	W %	T %	M %	W %
Prescription Opioid Pain Relievers						
Percentage reporting any use (medical or nonmedical) of prescription opioid pain relievers - past 12 months	31.3	31.8	30.9	31.4	29.6	32.9
Percentage using prescription opioid pain relievers for nonmedical purposes - past 12 months	18.0	20.1	16.2	16.4	16.8	16.0
Driving²						
Percentage of drivers who drove after drinking two or more drinks in the previous hour - past 12 months	3.9	6.0	2.0 *	4.5	7.2	2.0 *
Percentage of drivers who drove after using cannabis in the previous hour - past 12 months	2.5	2.9	2.1	2.8	3.5	2.2
Percentage of drivers who reported texting while driving - past 12 months	23.5	21.3	25.3	26.0	24.2	27.7
Percentage of drivers who reported texting while driving - past 30 days	18.4	16.6	19.9	21.8[†]	19.6	23.8
Mental Health						
Percentage reporting moderate to serious psychological distress during the past 30 days (K6/8+)	34.7	29.9	38.6 *	37.1	35.9 [†]	38.1
Percentage reporting serious psychological distress during the past 30 days (K6/13+)	14.9	12.4	16.9 *	17.1	16.8	17.4
Percentage using prescribed antianxiety medication - past 12 months	20.4	16.5	23.5 *	22.6	18.6	26.1 *
Percentage using prescribed antidepressant medication - past 12 months	17.3	13.1	20.8 *	18.5	16.0	20.7 *
Percentage reporting fair or poor mental health in general	31.8	29.4	34.0 *	30.7	27.5	33.5 *
Percentage reporting frequent mental distress days (14+) during the past 30 days	19.3	14.9	22.9 *	18.8	16.0	21.2 *
Percentage reporting suicidal ideation - past 12 months	7.7	5.6	9.4 *	8.0	7.8	8.2
Physical Health						
Percentage reporting fair or poor health in general	19.2	17.9	20.3	19.1	19.5	18.8
Percentage reporting frequent physically unhealthy days (14+) during the past 30 days	14.3	10.9	17.2 *	12.3	10.4	14.0 *

Notes: * Within year significant difference between men (M) and women (W) at p<0.05; [†] Significant change between 2022 and 2023; ² estimates are based on licensed drivers.

Key Findings in 2023

Significant sex differences

↑ Men are more likely to:	↑ Women are more likely to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ report daily drinking ◆ report weekly binge drinking ◆ drinking hazardously or harmfully ◆ report current smoking ◆ report lifetime cocaine use ◆ report driving after drinking two or more drinks in the previous hour during the past year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ report fair/poor self-rated mental health ◆ report frequent mental distress days ◆ report antianxiety medication use in the past year ◆ report use of antidepressants in the past year ◆ report frequent physically unhealthy days

Significant age and regional differences

Adults **18 to 29 years old** were more likely than their older counterparts to:

- ◆ report weekly binge drinking
- ◆ report drinking hazardously or harmfully
- ◆ report symptoms of alcohol dependence
- ◆ report e-cigarette use in the past year
- ◆ report e-cigarette use in the past 30 days
- ◆ report past year cannabis use
- ◆ report cannabis use in past three months,
- ◆ report moderate to high risk cannabis use problems in the past three months
- ◆ report cannabis use for medical purposes
- ◆ report texting while driving in the past year and 30 days
- ◆ report moderate to serious psychological distress
- ◆ report serious psychological distress
- ◆ report fair or poor mental health
- ◆ report suicidal ideation

Adults aged **65 years and older** were more likely than their younger counterparts to:

- ◆ report drinking daily in the past year
- ◆ report fair or poor overall health
- ◆ report frequent physically unhealthy days in the past 30 days

Significant **regional** differences were evident compared to the provincial average for:

- ◆ current smoking (higher in Toronto and the North)
- ◆ daily smoking (higher in the North)
- ◆ cannabis use in the past year (higher in the East and North, lower in Central East)
- ◆ cannabis use in the past three months (higher in the East and North)
- ◆ daily cannabis use in the past three months (higher in the East and North, lower in Toronto)
- ◆ cannabis use for medical purposes (higher in the East and North, lower in Central East)
- ◆ lifetime cocaine use (higher in the East and North, and lower in Central East)
- ◆ moderate to serious psychological distress (higher in the East, lower in Toronto)

Overall changes between 2022 and 2023

Indicators	2022		2023
Electronic cigarette use in the past year	13.7%	↑	16.0%
Electronic cigarette use in the past 30 days	8.2%	↑	11.5%
Moderate to high risk of cannabis use problems among past year cannabis users	64.4%	↓	56.7%
Texting while driving at least once in the past 30 days	18.4%	↑	21.8%

Subgroup differences between 2022 and 2023

There were some significant differences between the 2022 and 2023 estimates among men that were not evident among women, and vice versa. Specifically,

- Among **men**, a significantly **higher** percentage in the 2023 compared to the 2022 survey indicated moderate to serious psychological distress, and **lower** percentages reported symptoms of alcohol dependence, cannabis use during lifetime and in the past year, and moderate to high cannabis use problems in the past three months among total sample and cannabis users.
- Among **women**, significantly **higher** percentages in the 2023 compared to the 2022 survey reported electronic cigarette use in the past year and past 30 days.

Age group and regional differences (▲ increase / ▼ decrease) were also observed between 2022 and 2023 for the following substance use and mental health indicators:

- Daily smoking (▲ 18 to 29 years old)
- Moderate to high cannabis use problems (▼ 30 years or older)
- Moderate to high cannabis use problems among past year cannabis users (▼ 30 years or older)

- Cannabis use for medical purposes (▼ 50 to 64 years old, ▼ Central East)
- Cocaine use in the past year (▲ 18 to 29 years old)
- Cocaine use life time (▼ 40 to 49 years old, ▼ Central East)
- Moderate to serious psychological distress (▲ 50 to 64 years old, ▲ Central West)
- Serious psychological distress (▲ 50 to 64 years old, ▲ Central West)
- Antianxiety medication use (▲ Central West)
- Antidepressant use (▲ 50 to 64 years old, ▼ 65 years or older)
- Fair or poor mental health (▼ Toronto)
- Frequent physically unhealthy days (▼ 40 to 49 years old)

Indicators of Substance Use, Mental Health and Well-Being among Ontario Adults: Comparing 2023 to 2013 and 2018, CAMH Monitor¹

Indicator	10-year period 2023 vs. 2013	5-year period 2023 vs. 2018
% drinking alcohol in the past year	↓	—
% drinking daily (total sample)	—	—
% drinking daily (among drinkers)	—	—
% weekly binge drinking (5+ drinks)	↑	↑
% hazardous or harmful drinking (AUDIT 8+)	↑	↑
% reporting symptoms of alcohol dependence	↑	↑
% currently smoking cigarettes	↑	↑
% daily smoking cigarettes	—	↑
% using e-cigarettes in the past year	↑	↑
% using cannabis in the past year	↑	↑
% using cannabis in the past three months	↑	↑
% cannabis use problems in the past three months	↑	↑
% cannabis use for medical purposes in the past year	↑	↑
% use of prescription opioid pain relievers	↑	↑
% moderate-to-serious psychological distress	¶	↑
% fair or poor self-rated mental health	↑	↑
% frequent mental distress days	↑	↑
% prescription for anxiety in the past year	↑	↑
% prescription for depression in the past year	↑	↑
% fair or poor self-rated health	↑	↑
% frequent physically unhealthy days	↑	↑

Note: ¹The arrows indicate higher or lower odds of each indicator in 2023 compared to 10 years (2013) and 5 years (2018) ago, and are based on adjusted regression models accounting for sample size composition differences between years; adjusted models include age, sex, educational status, household income, region of residence and immigration status. ¶ Data not available for 2013, — No statistically significant difference between estimates. Statistically significant difference considered at p<0.05.