TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Recorded adult per capita consumption (age 15+)

Sources: FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), World Drink Trends 2003

Last year abstainers

In 1995, 80% of males and 54% of females reported that they had consumed 12 or more alcoholic drinks in their lifetime. Persons with low educational attainment reported a higher prevalence of drinking.2

A 1977–1986 urban survey conducted in the suburbs of St James and Woodbrook Park in Port-of-Spain (males n = 1340 and females n = 1046; aged 35 years and above) found that 35.4% of males and 75% of females were abstainers.3
Weekly alcohol drinkers

In a 1989 study of 1448 persons, including 306 adolescents aged between 16 and 19 years old, it was found that 42.5% of adolescent males, 11.3% of adolescent females and 21.9% of adult females were drinking at least once per month. Acute heavy drinking (more than five drinks on a single occasion) was more prevalent in adolescent females than in adult females.4

High risk drinkers in north central Trinidad

The same survey also found that 36.1% of males and 69.1% of females reported an AUDIT score of 0–1 (indicating no or very low alcohol intake).5

In 1995, heavy drinking (at least 21 units per week) was reported by 10.5% of males; the percentage rose to 13% in the central region of the country where the sugar industry is based.2

Youth drinking (lifetime prevalence of alcohol use)

The study also found that students’ first exposure to drinking alcohol was by family members in childhood or experimentation later. Transitions from primary to secondary schools and from junior to senior schools were associated with increased alcohol use. Ethnic reversals of substance abuse among high school students were observed by a high use of alcohol among Indo-Trinidadian and low use among Afro-Trinidadian students. The use of alcohol by students was also positively correlated to its use by fathers.7
Alcoholism in Tobago
A study conducted in Tobago found that CAGE responses consistent with alcoholism were present in 14.3% of males and 1.1% of females.  

Traditional alcoholic beverages
_Babash_ – a home-brewed rum is consumed. It is not permitted to be made or consumed in Trinidad and Tobago in part because of its excessively high alcohol content.

Unrecorded alcohol consumption
The unrecorded alcohol consumption in Trinidad and Tobago is estimated to be 0.0 litres pure alcohol per capita for population older than 15 for the years after 1995 (estimated by a group of key alcohol experts). 

Mortality rates from selected death causes where alcohol is one of the underlying risk factors
The data represent all the deaths occurring in a country irrespective of whether alcohol was a direct or indirect contributor.

Chronic mortality

![Chronic mortality graph](image)

Note: Chronic mortality time-series measured on two axes, ischaemic heart disease on right axis and the other causes on the left.
Acute mortality

![Graph showing acute mortality trends over years]

Source: WHO Mortality Database

Morbidity, health and social problems from alcohol use

A survey carried out in December 1984 at the Casualty Department of the Port-of-Spain General Hospital found that 68% of the 38 accident victims seen had blood alcohol concentrations higher than 50 mg per 100 ml and 55% had blood alcohol concentrations higher than 80 mg per 100 ml.9

Hospital admission figures, cirrhosis death rates, per capita alcohol consumption rates and other indices have for many years indicated a high prevalence of alcoholism in Trinidad and Tobago. A six-month survey of the medical wards at the Port-of-Spain General Hospital in 1979 showed that 47% of male admissions and 5% of female admissions were alcohol-related.9

In a 2-year retrospective study, it was found that alcohol abuse was a contributory risk factor for musculo-skeletal sporting injuries.10

In a study where 40 drug users were interviewed in Trinidad and Tobago, respondents frequently reported a history of alcohol abuse within the family.11

Country background information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population 2003</th>
<th>1 303 000</th>
<th>Life expectancy at birth (2002)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult (15+)</td>
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<td>Probability of dying under age 5 per 1000 (2002)</td>
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<td>% under 15</td>
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<td>Rural</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


References

3. Miller GJ et al. Adult male all-cause, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular mortality in relation to ethnic group, systolic blood pressure and blood glucose concentration in Trinidad, West Indies. International


