

Binge Drinking in High School and Risky Driving

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Binge drinking in high school is not something we want any of our teenage patients doing. Unfortunately, it is not rare either for teens to be impaired or in a car with an impaired driver due to binge drinking. Is this a behavior that stops after high school or does it continue? Vaca et al ([10.1542/peds.2018-4095](#)) evaluated data from 2009 to 2016 in a population-based cohort of 10th graders who make up the NEXT Generation Health Study (N=2785) who were followed over up to 4 years after leaving high school.

The authors found that during high school the prevalence of self-reported binge drinking remained fairly constant at about 25% per year. Unfortunately, the 12th grade self-report of those who were binge drinking carried with it an increased likelihood for those students to continue to drive while intoxicated (DWI), ride while intoxicated (RWI), or have blackouts related to binge drinking. Twelfth grade binge drinking is a strong predictor of similar behaviors on the road in early adulthood as well as persistent binge drinking. The good news is that positive parental supports attenuated and protected teens from showing enduring effects of high school binge drinking as these teens enter young adulthood. If ever there was a study to remember the importance of building up strengths in our adolescents, and teaching parents and care givers to emphasize those strengths and resiliencies in their teens to avoid later alcohol-related risking driving behaviors and outcomes, this is that study. Share the results with your patients and drive them in the right direction away from binge drinking and the hazardous driving associated with it.

- [Binge Drinking](#)
- [Frequent Binge Drinking Among US Adolescents, 1991 to 2015](#)
- [Alcohol Consumption in Movies and Adolescent Binge Drinking in 6 European Countries](#)
- [Binge Drinking and Associated Health Risk Behaviors Among High School Students](#)
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