

The CBHSQ Report

Spotlight

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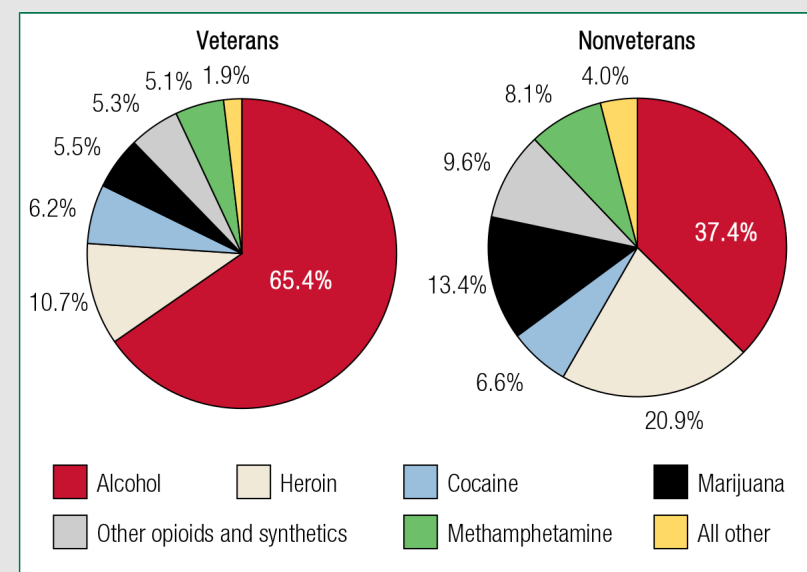
VETERANS' PRIMARY SUBSTANCE OF ABUSE IS ALCOHOL IN TREATMENT ADMISSIONS

Veterans who served in the U.S. military often face challenging experiences during their service.¹ Some veterans turn to substance use as a way to cope with these experiences.² This unhealthy behavior can lead to the need for substance abuse treatment.

The Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) is a database of substance abuse treatment admissions, primarily at publicly-funded treatment facilities. TEDS excludes admissions to Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities; therefore, the veteran admissions in TEDS represent veterans who chose to seek substance abuse treatment in a non-VA facility. According to TEDS data for 2013, there were about 62,000 admissions of veterans. The most common primary substance of abuse among veteran admissions was alcohol (65.4 percent), followed by heroin (10.7 percent) and cocaine (6.2 percent). Veteran admissions were more likely than nonveteran admissions to report alcohol as their primary substance of abuse (65.4 vs. 37.4 percent) and were less likely to report marijuana (5.5 vs. 13.4 percent) or heroin (10.7 vs. 20.9 percent) as the primary substance of abuse.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides resources and information for service providers working with military personnel and veterans at <http://www.samhsa.gov/militaryfamilies/>.

Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment by Veteran Status and Primary Substance of Abuse: 2013 TEDS



1. National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2011). *Substance abuse among the military, veterans, and their families—April 2011* (Topics in Brief). Retrieved from <http://www.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/veterans.pdf>
2. Committee on Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment, and Management of Substance Use Disorders in the U.S. Armed Forces. (2012). *Substance use disorders in the U.S. armed forces*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press. Retrieved from http://books.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=13441&page=24

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), 2013, based on data from adults aged 18 or older received through January 23, 2015. TEDS is a compilation of data on the demographic characteristics and substance abuse problems of admissions to substance abuse treatment facilities in the United States that report to individual state administrative data systems, primarily facilities that receive public funding. TEDS is maintained by the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, SAMHSA. Estimates in this report may differ from TEDS public use file estimates due to rounding. For more information on TEDS, see <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/client-level-data-teds>.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. The Data Spotlight may be copied without permission. Citation of the source is appreciated. Find this report and those on similar topics online at <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/>.