

Table 7.45B Mean Age at First Substance Use: Among Past Year Initiates Aged 12 to 49; Averages, 2002-2020

Substance	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
ILLICIT DRUGS	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr
Marijuana	17.0	16.8	17.1	17.4	17.4	17.6	17.8	17.0	18.4	17.5	17.9	18.0	18.5	19.0	19.3	19.7	19.3	20.6	20.2
Cocaine	19.8	19.8	20.0	19.7	20.3	20.2	19.8	19.9	21.2	20.1	20.0	20.4	21.8	21.5	21.8	21.8	21.9	22.4	21.8
Crack	25.0	21.8	21.9	23.4	22.8	29.6	27.1	20.6	24.8	20.8	20.5	24.4	26.4	21.3	25.0	25.9	27.7	27.2	26.6
Heroin	21.0	20.9	24.4	22.2	20.7	21.8	23.5	25.3	21.4	22.1	23.0	24.5	28.0	25.4	25.5	23.2	30.1	28.5	*
Hallucinogens	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	19.6	19.6	20.2	21.3	21.5	22.3
LSD	17.4	17.2	18.4	18.3	19.4	18.2	18.4	18.3	19.0	18.6	19.0	19.7	19.7	19.6	20.6	20.5	21.5	21.2	21.9
PCP	16.0	17.4	18.9	16.5	16.3	16.4	15.9	16.8	17.6	17.8	16.6	17.1	17.7	15.3	19.6	17.5	*	18.0	*
Ecstasy	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	20.7	21.4	21.5	21.9	22.0	25.3
Inhalants	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	17.4	18.2	18.9	18.0	18.4	18.6
Methamphetamine	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	25.8	24.6	23.3	25.8	25.6	31.3
Misuse of Prescription																			
Psychotherapeutics ¹	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr
Pain Relievers ¹	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	25.8	24.4	27.3	26.6	27.5	27.4
Stimulants	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	22.3	24.3	23.6	22.7	22.8	24.9
Tranquilizers or Sedatives	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr
Tranquilizers	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	25.9	23.9	25.2	23.6	24.1	25.8
Sedatives	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	28.3	24.8	27.3	25.0	27.5	29.2
Benzodiazepines	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Opioids	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr
Illicit Drugs Other Than Marijuana ²	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr	nr
CIGARETTES	16.9	16.9	16.7	17.3	17.1	16.9	17.4	17.5	17.3	17.2	17.8	17.8	18.6	17.9	18.0	18.8	18.6	18.5	19.4
Daily Cigarette Use	19.9	19.8	18.8	19.7	18.9	19.2	20.1	20.7	19.1	19.1	19.9	19.8	20.6	20.9	22.0	21.4	20.5	23.6	22.2
SMOKELESS TOBACCO	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	21.3	20.4	19.8	20.4	20.7	20.5
CIGARS	21.8	20.3	20.2	21.2	19.9	20.5	20.0	20.7	20.5	19.6	20.5	21.6	20.4	20.9	20.9	21.7	21.5	21.4	22.0
ALCOHOL	16.6	16.4	16.4	16.4	16.6	16.8	17.0	16.9	17.1	17.1	17.4	17.3	17.3	17.6	17.4	17.6	17.4	17.7	17.7

* = low precision; -- = not available; da = does not apply; nc = not comparable due to methodological changes; nr = not reported due to measurement issues.

NOTE: Estimates in the 2020 column are italicized to indicate caution should be used when comparing estimates between 2020 and prior years because of methodological changes for 2020. Due to these changes, significance testing between 2020 and prior years was not performed. See the *2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Methodological Summary and Definitions* for details.

NOTE: Some 2006 to 2010 estimates may differ from previously published estimates due to updates (see Chapter 3 of the *2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Methodological Summary and Definitions*).

NOTE: Methodological limitations preclude the estimation of past year initiates for aggregate substance use categories having at least one prescription psychotherapeutic, including categories for overall illicit drugs, misuse of prescription psychotherapeutics, tranquilizers or sedatives, opioids, and illicit drugs other than marijuana (see Chapter 3 of the *2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Methodological Summary and Definitions*).

¹ Prescription psychotherapeutic subtypes were revised in 2016; one effect was the comparability of codeine products between 2015 and later years.

² Illicit Drugs Other Than Marijuana excludes respondents who used only marijuana but includes those who used marijuana in addition to other illicit drugs.

Definitions: Measures and terms are defined in Appendix A.

Source: SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2002-2019, and Quarters 1 and 4, 2020.