

# 3 Consumption patterns

## Tobacco

Tobacco is associated with over four in five drug-related deaths and almost three in every five drug-related hospital episodes. The AIHW estimates that over 18,000 deaths nationally in 1997 and almost 150,000 hospital episodes were attributable to tobacco-related conditions (AIHW 1999). This amounts to an annual cost of approximately \$3.9 million based on an average hospital episode costing \$2,575 (AIHW 1999). The most frequently occurring tobacco-related conditions were cancers (e.g. lung, oesophageal), ischaemic heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Males are more than twice as likely as females to be hospitalised for, or die from, tobacco-related causes.

## Smoking status

In 1998, the age group which had the highest proportion of regular smokers was 18–34 years, and the age group with the lowest proportion was the 14–19 years age group (Tables 3.1, 3.2). Rates of smoking by younger females were similar to rates in younger males in 1998, further evidence of the apparent sustainability of a trend established in the last decade.

**Table 3.1: Tobacco smoking status: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by sex, Western Australia, 1995**

Smoking status	Age groups				18–34	20–39	All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+			
	(per cent)						
	<b>Males</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	6.7	39.5	25.0	22.8	28.6	31.4	24.2
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	7.2	6.5	10.0	2.7	9.8	8.4	5.6
Ex-smokers	14.5	20.3	44.2	47.2	28.6	33.6	37.4
Never smoked	71.6	33.7	20.8	27.4	32.9	26.5	32.7
	<b>Females</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	11.6	38.9	27.9	17.1	30.9	32.9	23.1
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	1.4	1.6	7.9	3.3	2.1	5.0	3.8
Ex-smokers	29.7	30.6	38.3	36.6	37.7	34.8	35.1
Never smoked	57.3	28.9	25.8	43.1	29.3	27.2	38.0
	<b>Persons</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	9.0	39.2	26.5	19.9	29.8	32.2	23.7
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	4.5	4.0	9.0	3.0	5.9	6.7	4.7
Ex-smokers	21.6	25.6	41.3	41.7	33.2	34.2	36.2
Never smoked	65.0	31.2	23.3	35.4	31.1	26.9	35.4

(a) Regular: smokes daily/most days.

(b) Occasional: smokes less often than daily/most days.

**Table 3.2: Tobacco smoking status: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by sex, Western Australia, 1998**

Smoking status	Age groups						
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	18–34	20–39	All ages
(per cent)							
<b>Males</b>							
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	8.9	28.5	27.5	25.6	31.5	28.0	24.7
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	4.9	12.2	2.5	2.1 *	8.1	7.4	4.6
Ex-smokers	22.9	19.5	49.8	55.5	24.4	34.5	43.3
Never smoked	63.3	39.8	20.2	16.8	36.0	30.1	27.4
<b>Females</b>							
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	10.9	29.6	27.8	15.6	29.3	31.2	20.5
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	6.2	12.9	2.9	2.5 *	10.0	7.8	5.1
Ex-smokers	40.8	28.2	34.1	46.8	30.7	28.7	39.7
Never smoked	42.0	29.3	35.2	35.1	30.1	32.3	34.7
<b>Persons</b>							
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	9.9	29.1	27.6	20.7	30.4	28.4	22.6
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	5.5	12.5	2.7	2.3 *	9.0	7.6	4.8
Ex-smokers	31.8	23.8	41.9	51.2	27.6	32.9	41.5
Never smoked	52.8	34.6	27.7	25.8	33.0	31.2	31.0

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) Regular: smokes daily/most days.

(b) Occasional: smokes less often than daily/most days.

- Approximately 15% of West Australian teenagers smoked in 1998, which is a slight increase from 14% in 1995. One in 10 were considered to be regular smokers, with one in 20 (6%) considered to be occasional smokers. More than half (53%) of all teenagers had never smoked.
- Regular smoking rates for West Australians peaked at 20–29 years of age (29%).
- Males in Western Australia were more likely to be regular smokers (25%) than females (21%).
- The proportion of the West Australian community aged 20–29 years that were regular smokers decreased 10 percentage points from 39% in 1995 to 29% in 1998.
- Overall smoking levels for persons in Western Australia decreased slightly from 28% in 1995 to 27% in 1998.

## Number of cigarettes smoked

Generally, the quantities of cigarettes smoked by male smokers exceeded those of female smokers (Table 3.3).

**Table 3.3: Recent<sup>(a)</sup> tobacco smokers: number of cigarettes, by smoking status, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1998**

Age groups	Smoking status							Mean per week (number)
	Less than weekly	Recent occasional			Recent regular			
		1–10 week	11–30 week	31+ week	1–10 day	11–20 day	> 20 day	
(per cent)								
<b>Males</b>								
14–19	41.4	—	—	—	10.2	38.6	9.9	57
20–29	22.0	8.5	—	—	28.1	31.7	9.7	61
30–39	8.3	—	—	—	20.3	23.4	48.0	135
40+	—	—	4.0	3.6	3.2	44.6	44.7	151
18–34	15.5 *	5.6 *	—	—	29.3	30.0	19.6	80
20–39	16.2	4.9	—	—	24.8	28.2	25.9	93
<b>All ages</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>36.2</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>Females</b>								
14–19	15.5	18.1	5.5	—	31.8	29.2	—	51
20–29	12.0	15.4	2.9	—	13.6	43.8	12.2	77
30–39	9.8	—	—	—	17.2	53.8	19.2	104
40+	—	—	—	14.4 *	4.1	25.8	55.7	143
18–34	10.7	12.4	2.6	—	17.4	43.0	13.8	79
20–39	11.1	8.9	1.7	—	15.1	48.0	15.1	88
<b>All ages</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Persons</b>								
14–19	26.6	10.3	3.1	—	22.5	33.2	4.3	54
20–29	16.9	12.0	1.5	—	20.8	37.8	11.0	69
30–39	9.1	—	—	—	18.7	38.7	33.5	120
40+	—	—	2.5 *	7.6 *	3.5	37.5	48.8	148
18–34	13.1	9.0	1.3	—	23.2	36.6	16.7	80
20–39	13.6	6.9	0.9	—	19.9	38.2	20.5	90
<b>All ages</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>37.6</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>111</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

Note: Base equals all recent smokers.

- The typical quantity of cigarettes for recent regular smokers was 11–20 cigarettes per day.
- One in three teenagers smoked between 11 and 20 cigarettes per day, with more males (39%) than females (29%) in the age group smoking at this rate. The mean number of cigarettes smoked per week by teenage males was 57, which was more than the number for teenage female smokers (51).
- The mean number of cigarettes smoked per week peaked at 148 for smokers aged 40 years and over. Male smokers in this age group smoked, on average, eight cigarettes more (151) per week than did females (143).
- Female smokers aged 20–29 years, however, smoked on average 77 cigarettes per week compared with 20–29 year old males who smoked only 61 cigarettes per week on average.

# Alcohol

Alcohol is second only to tobacco in drug-related deaths and hospital episodes. The Institute estimates that nationally in 1997 there were almost 4,000 alcohol-related deaths and just under 100,000 hospital episodes. Principal among alcohol-related causes of deaths and hospital episodes were cirrhosis of the liver, strokes and motor vehicle accidents.

## Drinking status

In 1998, the age group that had the highest proportion of regular drinkers was 20–29 years (58%), and the age group with the lowest proportion was 14–19 years (34%). Rates of regular drinking by males compared with females were consistently higher for all age groups in 1998 (Tables 3.4, 3.5).

**Table 3.4: Alcohol drinking status: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by sex, Western Australia, 1995**

Smoking status	Age groups						
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	18–34	20–39	All ages
	(per cent)						
	<b>Males</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	19.6	58.0	55.3	62.3	58.1	56.5	54.6
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	38.5	36.0	31.6	23.7	26.9	33.6	29.6
Ex-drinker	4.8	6.0	13.1	6.5	13.1	9.9	7.7
Not more than one glass of alcohol	37.1	—	—	7.5	1.8	—	8.1
	<b>Females</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	11.2	47.9	28.1	39.3	37.8	37.2	35.4
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	37.6	36.5	49.0	40.3	39.4	43.2	41.2
Ex-drinker	4.1	11.3	15.4	6.9	14.7	13.5	9.3
Not more than one glass of alcohol	47.0	4.3	7.6	13.5	8.0	6.1	14.1
	<b>Persons</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	15.7	52.8	41.7	50.6	47.8	46.7	44.9
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	38.1	36.2	40.3	32.1	33.3	38.5	35.4
Ex-drinker	4.5	8.7	14.2	6.7	13.9	11.7	8.5
Not more than one glass of alcohol	41.7	2.2	3.8	10.5	5.0	3.1	11.1

(a) Regular: drinks daily/most days.

(b) Occasional: drinks less often than daily/most days.

**Table 3.5: Alcohol drinking status: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by sex, Western Australia, 1998**

Smoking status	Age groups						
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	18–34	20–39	All ages
	(per cent)						
	<b>Males</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	34.3	68.8	65.2	64.6	62.9	67.0	62.2
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	36.5	27.9	26.7	26.5	30.2	27.3	28.0
Ex-drinker	9.7	3.3 *	4.9	4.2	3.7	4.1	4.8
Not more than one glass of alcohol	19.4	—	3.2	4.7	3.2	1.6	5.0
	<b>Females</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	33.5	46.3	42.8	45.1	46.6	44.5	43.6
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	42.7	32.0	42.9	37.5	34.9	37.5	38.1
Ex-drinker	3.8	16.0	10.2	6.8	13.5	13.0	9.1
Not more than one glass of alcohol	20.1	5.7	4.1	10.5	5.0	4.9	9.3
	<b>Persons</b>						
Regular <sup>(a)</sup>	33.9	57.8	54.0	54.7	54.7	55.9	52.9
Occasional <sup>(b)</sup>	39.5	29.9	34.8	32.1	32.6	32.4	33.0
Ex-drinker	6.8	9.5	7.5	5.6	8.7	8.5	6.9
Not more than one glass of alcohol	19.8	2.8	3.6	7.7	4.1	3.2	7.2

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) Regular: drinks daily/most days.

(b) Occasional: drinks less often than daily/most days.

- In 1998, approximately nine in 10 (86%) persons in Western Australia had consumed alcohol recently. This was consistent for all age groups aside from the 14–19 years group where approximately seven in 10 (73%) persons had recently consumed alcohol.
- In 1998, males were more likely to be regular drinkers of alcohol (62%) than females (44%).
- Recent consumption of alcohol by teenagers increased from 54% in 1995 to 73% in 1998.

## Consumption patterns

In 1995, more than half of all recent drinkers (53%) in Western Australia usually consumed 1–2 standard drinks on an occasion when they drank (Table 3.6).

**Table 3.6: Quantity of alcohol usually consumed, proportion of recent<sup>(a)</sup> alcohol drinkers aged 14 years and over, by sex, Western Australia, 1995**

Quantity (standard drinks)	Age groups						All ages
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	18–34	20–39	
	(per cent)						
	<b>Males</b>						
1–2	28.6	25.3	36.9	47.7	27.6	31.2	39.3
3–4	22.0	33.9	30.5	33.3	29.9	32.2	31.7
5–6	23.7	18.2	21.1	10.7	21.2	19.7	15.5
7+	25.8	22.5	11.5	8.4	21.2	16.9	13.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Females</b>						
1–2	30.8	41.5	69.4	83.4	46.5	56.8	67.1
3–4	39.5	29.8	21.2	13.7	28.2	25.1	21.0
5–6	16.4	13.1	3.9	2.2	12.2	8.1	6.0
7+	13.3	15.6	5.5	0.7	13.0	10.0	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Persons</b>						
1–2	29.6	33.1	53.8	64.3	36.9	44.1	52.6
3–4	29.9	31.9	25.7	24.2	29.0	28.6	26.6
5–6	20.4	15.8	12.1	6.7	16.8	13.8	11.0
7+	20.1	19.2	8.3	4.8	17.2	13.4	9.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

Note: Base equals recent alcohol drinkers.

**Table 3.7: Quantity of alcohol usually consumed, proportion of recent<sup>(a)</sup> alcohol drinkers aged 14 years and over, by sex, Western Australia, 1998**

Quantity (standard drinks)	Age groups						
	14–19	20–29	30–39	40+	18–34	20–39	All ages
	(per cent)						
	<b>Males</b>						
1–2	41.8	29.5	37.8	42.8	33.6	33.5	38.5
3–4	12.4	20.0	40.0	35.5	23.4	29.6	31.0
5–6	11.5	13.2	6.2	14.3	11.9	9.8	12.1
7+	34.3	37.3	16.0	7.4	31.1	27.0	18.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Females</b>						
1–2	24.4	43.5	63.6	82.5	46.0	54.3	64.6
3–4	31.8	27.7	29.3	13.7	27.0	28.6	21.9
5–6	16.1	14.1	5.6	3.0	11.9	9.5	7.1
7+	27.6	14.8	1.4	0.7	15.1	7.6	6.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	<b>Persons</b>						
1–2	32.4	35.5	50.3	61.7	39.4	43.0	50.8
3–4	22.9	23.3	34.8	25.2	25.1	29.1	26.7
5–6	14.0	13.6	5.9	8.9	11.9	9.7	9.7
7+	30.7	27.6	8.9	4.2	23.6	18.1	12.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

Note: Base equals recent alcohol drinkers.

- In 1995, approximately one in four persons in Western Australia consumed 3–4 standard drinks on an occasion when they drank.
- In 1998, the 14–19 years age group was more likely (31%) to consume 7 or more standard drinks on an occasion than any other age group.
- In 1998, persons aged 40 and over were the most likely (62%) to consume 1–2 drinks on an occasion when they drank.

In 1992 the National Health and Medical Research Council published guidelines on responsible drinking, namely:

- that the consumption of alcohol by men should not exceed 4 units or 40 grams of absolute alcohol per day on a regular basis, or 28 units per week; that 4–6 units per day or 28–42 units per week be considered hazardous and that more than 6 units per day or 42 units per week be regarded as harmful;
- that the consumption of alcohol by women should not exceed 2 units per day or 14 units per week on a regular basis; that is 2–4 units per day or 14–28 units per week be considered hazardous and that more than 4 units per day or 28 units per week be considered harmful.

## Illicit drugs

The Institute estimates that, nationally in 1997, 831 persons died and there were over 11,000 hospital episodes from illicit drug-related causes. Although apparently small in numbers relative to deaths and hospital episodes due to tobacco and alcohol, illicit drug-related morbidity and mortality usually affects the young, resulting in relatively more life years debilitated or lost.

### Use of cannabis

In 1998, more than two in every five (45%) West Australians aged 14 years or older had used cannabis at some time in their lives (Table 3.8).

**Table 3.8: Use of cannabis: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Last 7 days		Age of initiation	
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
(per cent)										
(mean years)										
<b>Males</b>										
14–19	28.1	38.1	28.1	32.3	10.0	22.4	10.0	21.7	13.5	13.5
20–29	70.0	78.3	50.7	67.0	32.6	38.6	21.3	26.6	16.0	16.4
30–39	71.9	61.6	26.4	20.3	11.5	11.7	11.5	8.0	18.2	19.1
40+	19.4	29.6	4.2	11.1	3.0	4.1	3.0	2.3 *	23.3	22.2
18–34	64.7	74.0	42.4	52.0	22.2	29.3	16.1	20.4	16.5	17.3
20–39	71.1	69.9	37.3	44.1	20.6	25.2	15.7	17.3	17.2	17.5
<b>All ages</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>47.5</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>18.5</b>
<b>Females</b>										
14–19	31.2	48.1	18.6	36.0	10.2	12.5	10.2	7.3	14.7	14.6
20–29	70.4	66.9	29.4	31.3	20.3	7.5	17.8	4.7	17.0	16.7
30–39	48.7	60.4	18.4	20.2	9.0	4.3	6.5	3.2	21.3	19.4
40+	8.3	23.1	2.5	6.2	0.3	3.2	0.3	1.9 *	27.3	25.9
18–34	60.3	67.5	26.0	31.0	17.5	9.0	15.0	6.3	17.5	17.4
20–39	58.9	63.6	23.8	25.5	14.3	5.9	11.8	3.9	18.9	18.0
<b>All ages</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>19.6</b>
<b>Persons</b>										
14–19	29.6	42.9	23.7	34.1	10.1	17.5	10.1	14.6	14.1	14.1
20–29	70.2	72.7	39.4	50.2	26.1	23.3	19.4	15.8	16.5	16.5
30–39	60.5	61.0	22.5	20.3	10.2	8.0	9.0	5.6	19.4	19.3
40+	13.9	26.2	3.3	8.6	1.7	3.7	1.7	2.1 *	24.5	23.9
18–34	62.5	70.7	33.9	41.7	19.8	19.1	15.5	13.3	17.0	17.3
20–39	64.9	66.8	30.5	35.0	17.4	15.6	13.7	10.6	18.0	17.7
<b>All ages</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>44.8</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>19.0</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.



- Between 1995 and 1998, the lifetime use of cannabis for West Australians aged 14 years and over increased from 37% to 45%.
- Female lifetime use of cannabis had the largest increase, from 32% in 1995 to 42% in 1998.
- The 20–29 years age group in 1998 had the highest proportion of lifetime users of cannabis (73%).
- Use of cannabis by West Australians in the last 12 months increased 34% from 17% in 1995 to 22% in 1998.
- Males (15%) in Western Australia were almost 3 times as likely to have used cannabis in the last 4 weeks as females (5%).
- Use of cannabis by West Australians in the last 7 days decreased slightly to 7% in 1998.
- Males (11%) in Western Australia were approximately 3 times more likely to have used cannabis in the last 7 days than West Australian females (3%).
- The age of initiation for cannabis for West Australians remained stable at around 19 years of age between 1995 and 1998.

## Use of heroin

The proportion of Western Australians aged 14 years or older who had ever tried heroin appears to have increased slightly, from 2.2% in 1995 to 3.2% in 1998 (Table 3.9).

**Table 3.9: Use of heroin: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation	
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
(per cent)					(mean years)			
<b>Males</b>								
14–19	—	1.5 *	—	—	—	—	—	—
20–29	5.1	12.6	—	8.5	—	—	16.0	25.7
30–39	10.0	4.7	3.4	2.5	—	—	17.5	22.3
40+	1.3	3.0 *	—	—	—	—	48.0	25.2 *
18–34	8.4	9.0	2.4	5.7	—	—	15.9	25.9
20–39	7.9	8.7	1.9	5.5	—	—	17.1	25.2
<b>All ages</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>2.3</b>	—	—	<b>21.9</b>	<b>25.2</b>
<b>Females</b>								
14–19	—	3.9	—	3.9	—	—	—	15.1
20–29	2.5	1.4 *	—	0.7 *	—	—	17.0	18.0 *
30–39	0.7	2.3	—	0.6 *	—	0.6 *	32.0	25.5
40+	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
18–34	1.4	1.7 *	—	1.3 *	—	—	17.0	16.5 *
20–39	1.5	1.8 *	—	0.6 *	—	0.3 *	20.6	22.7 *
<b>All ages</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.2</b>	—	<b>0.7 *</b>	—	<b>0.1 *</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>20.6</b>
<b>Persons</b>								
14–19	—	2.6	—	1.9 *	—	—	—	15.1
20–29	3.7	7.1	—	4.7	—	—	16.4	24.9
30–39	5.4	3.5	1.7	1.5 *	—	0.3 *	18.4	23.9
40+	0.6	1.5 *	—	—	—	—	48.0	25.2 *
18–34	4.8	5.3	1.2	3.5	—	—	16.1	24.2
20–39	4.6	5.3	1.0	3.1	—	0.1 *	17.7	24.6
<b>All ages</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>1.5</b>	—	<b>0.1 *</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>24.2</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.

The relatively low rates of heroin usage revealed in this survey render most stratified analyses statistically unreliable (see notes in Chapter 5).

- In 1998, males (5.2%) in Western Australia were more likely to have ever used heroin than females (1.2%).
- The age groups that had the highest proportions of persons ever using heroin in both 1995 and 1998 were the 20–29 years and 30–39 years groups.
- The mean age of initiation for heroin use increased by 2.5 years between 1995 and 1998 from 21.7 years to 24.2 years of age, although the age of initiation for females was unchanged.

## Use of amphetamines

The proportion of Western Australians that had ever tried amphetamines increased slightly between 1995 (9%) and 1998 (11%) (Table 3.10).

**Table 3.10: Use of amphetamines<sup>(a)</sup>: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation			
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998		
							(per cent)		(mean years)	
<b>Males</b>										
14–19	4.8	8.0	4.8	6.6	—	2.0 *	15.8	15.5		
20–29	30.1	43.1	14.7	36.0	1.7	4.0 *	18.2	20.6		
30–39	13.2	18.2	—	3.0	—	0.4 *	18.1	20.0		
40+	4.2	4.7	—	2.3 *	—	—	29.0	26.9		
18–34	21.1	32.6	7.9	24.3	0.9	2.7 *	18.0	20.5		
20–39	20.5	30.6	6.3	19.7	0.7	2.2 *	18.2	20.4		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>1.2 *</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>20.8</b>		
<b>Females</b>										
14–19	8.4	5.8	1.4	5.8	—	2.7	17.5	15.4		
20–29	21.1	15.8	10.6	6.2	—	1.9 *	19.2	19.6		
30–39	3.0	5.3	0.7	0.6 *	—	0.6 *	27.3	23.4		
40+	0.9	1.1 *	0.3	—	—	—	24.1	24.0 *		
18–34	15.1	12.2	6.4	5.2	—	2.0 *	19.0	19.6		
20–39	11.4	10.5	5.3	3.4	—	1.2 *	20.3	20.6		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.0</b>	—	<b>0.8 *</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>20.4</b>		
<b>Persons</b>										
14–19	6.5	6.9	3.2	6.2	—	2.4	16.8	15.4		
20–29	25.4	29.7	12.5	21.4	0.8	3.0 *	18.7	20.4		
30–39	8.2	11.7	0.3	1.8 *	—	0.5 *	19.8	20.7		
40+	2.5	2.8 *	0.2	1.1 *	—	—	27.7	26.2 *		
18–34	18.0	22.3	7.2	14.6	0.4	2.4	18.4	20.3		
20–39	15.9	20.7	5.8	11.5	0.4	1.7 *	19.0	20.5		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>20.7</b>		

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) For non-medical purposes.

- In 1998, West Australian males (16%) were more than 3 times more likely to have ever used amphetamines than females (5%).
- The 20–29 years age group in Western Australia reported the highest use of amphetamines in the last 12 months for both 1995 (13%) and 1998 (21%).
- Use of amphetamines by West Australians in the last 12 months doubled from 3% in 1995 to 6% in 1998.
- In 1998, males (10%) were more likely to have used amphetamines in the last 12 months than females (2%).

## Use of hallucinogens

The proportion of Western Australians that had ever tried hallucinogens increased slightly between 1995 (10%) and 1998 (12%) (Table 3.11).

**Table 3.11: Use of hallucinogens: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation	
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
	(per cent)						(mean years)	
<b>Males</b>								
14–19	6.3	11.4	6.3	8.8	—	—	14.4	15.8
20–29	30.1	41.5	15.7	19.2	3.3	0.3 *	17.6	21.3
30–39	21.0	18.0	—	1.8 *	—	—	17.3	—
40+	4.5	7.6	—	—	—	—	23.6	—
18–34	25.1	32.2	8.5	14.1	1.8	0.2 *	17.1	20.5
20–39	24.9	29.7	6.8	10.6	1.4	0.1 *	17.5	21.3
<b>All ages</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.1 *</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>18.3</b>
<b>Females</b>								
14–19	11.2	12.7	5.5	10.1	—	1.3 *	—	15.4
20–29	19.2	17.9	6.7	6.7	—	—	16.4	20.0
30–39	5.5	9.3	—	—	—	—	26.0	—
40+	0.7	1.2 *	—	—	—	—	18.0	—
18–34	14.3	14.5	5.5	5.4	—	0.4 *	16.4	18.9
20–39	11.8	13.5	3.1	3.3	—	—	17.9	20.0
<b>All ages</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>2.5</b>	—	<b>0.1 *</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>17.0</b>
<b>Persons</b>								
14–19	8.6	12.1	6.0	9.4	—	0.6 *	15.3	15.6
20–29	24.3	29.9	10.9	13.1	1.6	0.1 *	17.6	20.8
30–39	13.3	13.7	—	0.9 *	—	—	18.6	—
40+	2.6	4.3	—	—	—	—	24.1	—
18–34	19.6	23.3	6.9	9.7	0.9	0.3 *	17.5	19.8
20–39	18.3	21.7	4.9	7.0	0.7	0.1 *	17.9	20.8
<b>All ages</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.1 *</b>	<b>18.3</b>	<b>17.8</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.

- In 1998, West Australian males (17%) were more than twice as likely to have ever used hallucinogens as females (8%).
- The 20–29 years age group in Western Australia reported the highest use of hallucinogens in 1995 (24%) and 1998 (30%).
- The use of hallucinogens by West Australians in the last 12 months increased marginally to 4% in 1998.
- In 1998, males (5%) were approximately twice as likely to have used hallucinogens in the last 12 months as females (3%).
- Between 1995 and 1998, the age of initiation for use of hallucinogens for persons in Western Australia remained stable at around 18 years of age.

## Use of ecstasy

The proportion of Western Australians that had ever tried ecstasy increased between 1995 (5%) and 1998 (7%) (Table 3.12).

**Table 3.12: Use of ecstasy: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation			
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998		
							(per cent)		(mean years)	
<b>Males</b>										
14–19	8.5	3.1	8.5	3.1	—	—	15.1	16.4		
20–29	18.0	34.5	13.3	30.5	1.7	1.5 *	19.8	19.6		
30–39	—	9.0	—	2.2 *	—	—	—	26.9		
40+	2.4	2.3 *	—	2.3 *	—	—	37.0	30.0		
18–34	9.7	24.5	7.2	20.0	0.9	0.9 *	19.8	20.4		
20–39	7.8	21.7	5.8	16.3	0.7	0.8 *	19.8	21.2		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3 *</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>22.0</b>		
<b>Females</b>										
14–19	1.4	4.3	—	4.3	—	1.2 *	16.0	15.9		
20–29	18.8	9.0	10.2	6.9	—	0.4 *	19.7	19.3		
30–39	3.9	4.4	—	0.5	—	0.5 *	31.0	26.9		
40+	0.3	—	—	—	—	—	36.0	—		
18–34	11.8	7.7	5.8	5.1 *	—	0.6 *	20.5	20.1		
20–39	10.8	6.7	4.8	3.6	—	0.5 *	21.9	21.4		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	—	<b>0.3 *</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>20.7</b>		
<b>Persons</b>										
14–19	5.2	3.7	4.6	3.7	—	0.6 *	15.3	16.1		
20–29	18.4	22.0	11.7	18.9	0.8	1.0 *	19.7	19.6		
30–39	1.9	6.7	—	1.4 *	—	0.3 *	31.0	26.9		
40+	1.4	1.1 *	—	1.1 *	—	—	36.9	30.0		
18–34	10.8	16.0	6.5	12.5	0.4	0.8 *	20.2	20.4		
20–39	9.3	14.3	5.3	10.1	0.4	0.6 *	21.0	21.2		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.3 *</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>21.7</b>		

\* RSE greater than 50%.

- Lifetime use of ecstasy by males in Western Australia almost doubled from 5.4% in 1995 to 10.5% in 1998.
- Lifetime use of ecstasy for females decreased from 4.9% in 1995 to 3.2% in 1998.
- Approximately 19% of West Australians in the 20–29 years age group had used ecstasy at some stage in their lives.
- Use of ecstasy by West Australians in the last 12 months increased from 2.7% in 1995 to 5.1% in 1998.
- Approximately 31% of West Australian males aged 20–29 years had used ecstasy in the last 12 months.

## Use of cocaine

The proportion of Western Australians that had ever tried cocaine appears to have increased slightly between 1995 (3%) and 1998 (4%) (Table 3.13).

**Table 3.13: Use of cocaine: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation			
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998		
							(per cent)		(mean years)	
<b>Males</b>										
14–19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
20–29	11.8	6.5	1.7	4.0	1.7	—	17.8	20.2		
30–39	10.1	9.2	3.4	1.4 *	—	—	23.2	23.5		
40+	—	3.2	—	2.3	—	—	—	26.9		
18–34	10.4	7.1	3.3	3.1	0.9	—	18.7	21.7		
20–39	10.8	7.8	2.7	2.7	0.7	—	20.6	22.1		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>23.8</b>		
<b>Females</b>										
14–19	—	2.7	—	1.2 *	—	—	—	15.8		
20–29	6.5	6.6	1.0	1.1 *	—	—	19.5	20.7		
30–39	0.8	3.7	—	—	—	—	26.0	20.7		
40+	1.1	2.3 *	—	—	—	—	24.7	36.1 *		
18–34	4.3	5.4	0.6	1.1 *	—	—	20.4	19.8		
20–39	3.5	5.1	0.5	0.6 *	—	—	20.4	20.7		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.4 *</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>25.3</b>		
<b>Persons</b>										
14–19	—	1.3 *	—	0.6 *	—	—	—	15.8 *		
20–29	9.0	6.5	1.3	2.6 *	0.8	—	18.4	20.5		
30–39	5.5	6.5	1.7	0.7 *	—	—	23.4	22.7		
40+	0.5	2.7 *	—	1.1 *	—	—	24.7	30.8 *		
18–34	7.2	6.2	1.9	2.1	0.4	—	19.2	20.9		
20–39	7.1	6.5	1.5	1.6 *	0.4	—	20.6	21.6		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>24.5</b>		

\* RSE greater than 50%.

- Lifetime use of cocaine by females in Western Australia appears to have increased from 2.0% in 1995 to 3.5% in 1998, but increased less for males.
- Use of cocaine by West Australians in the last 12 months appears to have doubled from 0.6% in 1995 to 1.3% in 1998.
- The age of initiation for cocaine increased almost 4 years, from 20.9 in 1995 to 24.5 years of age in 1998. The biggest increase was for females aged 40 years and over, where there was an increase of 11 years.

## Use of analgesics

The proportion of Western Australians that had ever tried analgesics for non-medical purposes decreased between 1995 (15%) and 1998 (11%) (Table 3.14).

**Table 3.14: Use of analgesics<sup>(a)</sup>: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation	
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
	(per cent)						(mean years)	
<b>Males</b>								
14–19	10.9	19.9	—	6.3	—	—	13.0	13.2
20–29	24.4	6.0	10.2	4.5	10.0	1.4 *	15.0	16.0
30–39	27.1	8.7	7.8	2.8	2.0	0.7 *	18.9	20.7
40+	4.7	7.4	0.6	1.1 *	—	2.1 *	20.6	43.4
18–34	29.0	6.0	10.3	4.0	5.4	1.3 *	16.5	19.8
20–39	25.9	7.3	8.8	3.7	5.5	1.1 *	17.3	18.8
<b>All ages</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1.4 *</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>27.7</b>
<b>Females</b>								
14–19	13.0	8.8	11.2	6.4	1.8	—	10.0	15.6
20–29	12.9	22.9	5.7	5.2	3.8	4.4	15.7	17.0
30–39	19.2	12.5	10.1	7.0	8.0	0.9 *	18.0	21.1
40+	14.0	10.3	7.5	5.7	2.4	3.2	20.8	27.4
18–34	18.6	16.2	10.0	4.7	5.5	2.8	16.0	16.6
20–39	16.2	17.7	8.0	6.1	6.1	2.6	17.0	18.9
<b>All ages</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>21.0</b>
<b>Persons</b>								
14–19	11.9	14.5	5.2	6.4	0.8	—	11.5	13.8
20–29	18.3	14.3	7.8	4.8	6.8	2.9	15.3	16.8
30–39	23.2	10.6	8.9	4.9	4.9	0.8 *	18.6	20.9
40+	9.3	8.9	4.0	3.5	1.2	2.7 *	20.7	36.4
18–34	23.6	11.1	10.2	4.4	5.4	2.1	16.3	17.6
20–39	21.0	12.4	8.4	4.9	5.8	1.8 *	17.2	18.9
<b>All ages</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>24.0</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) For non-medical purposes.

- In 1998, West Australian females (13%) were more likely than males (9%) to have ever used analgesics.
- The 14–19 years (15%) and 20–29 years (14%) age groups reported the highest lifetime use of analgesics in 1998.
- Use of analgesics by West Australians in the last 12 months appears to have decreased from 6% in 1995 to 4% in 1998.
- Females (6%) were more than twice as likely than males (3%) to have used analgesics in the last 12 months.
- The age of initiation for analgesic use increased 6 years, from 18 years in 1995 to 24 years of age in 1998.

## Use of tranquillisers

The proportion of Western Australians that had ever tried tranquillisers appears to have increased between 1995 (3%) and 1998 (5%) (Table 3.15).

**Table 3.15: Use of tranquillisers<sup>(a)</sup>: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation	
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
(per cent)								
<b>Males</b>								
14–19	—	5.8	—	5.8	—	—	—	—
20–29	10.1	4.1	—	0.7 *	—	—	15.8	21.0
30–39	9.3	5.7	—	3.0	—	0.7 *	14.7	27.5
40+	0.6	2.3 *	—	—	—	—	35.0	—
18–34	11.2	4.7	—	1.4 *	—	0.4 *	15.3	25.5
20–39	9.6	4.9	—	1.8 *	—	0.4 *	15.2	25.5
<b>All ages</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>0.1 *</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>25.5</b>
<b>Females</b>								
14–19	—	5.5	—	4.3	—	—	—	16.8
20–29	2.7	10.1	2.0	5.9	2.0	—	13.3	18.9
30–39	3.2	9.9	3.2	7.1	—	0.9 *	23.1	19.7
40+	2.1	3.3 *	0.3	3.3	—	—	33.4	45.0 *
18–34	2.7	9.1	2.3	5.8	1.1	0.6 *	18.2	18.2
20–39	3.0	10.0	2.7	6.5	0.9	0.5 *	19.0	19.3
<b>All ages</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.2 *</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>23.6</b>
<b>Persons</b>								
14–19	—	5.6	—	5.1	—	—	—	16.8
20–29	6.3	7.1	1.1	3.2	1.0	—	15.3	19.8
30–39	6.3	7.8	1.6	5.0	—	0.8 *	16.8	24.6
40+	1.4	2.8 *	0.2	1.7 *	—	—	33.8	45.0 *
18–34	6.9	6.9	1.2	3.6	0.6	0.5 *	15.9	21.5
20–39	6.3	7.4	1.3	4.1	0.5	0.4 *	16.1	22.6
<b>All ages</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.2 *</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>24.4</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) For non-medical purposes.

- Females (6%) were more likely to have ever used tranquillisers than males (4%).
- In 1998, the age group with the highest lifetime use of tranquillisers in Western Australia was the 30–39 years age group (8%).
- Use of tranquillisers in the last 12 months appears to have increased substantially from 0.6% in 1995 to 3.1% in 1998.
- The age of initiation for persons aged 14 years and over in Western Australia using tranquillisers increased 4 years from 20 years in 1995 to 24 years of age in 1998.



## Use of barbiturates

The proportion of persons in Western Australia that had ever used barbiturates appears to have decreased slightly from 3% in 1995 to 2% in 1998 (Table 3.16). However, these estimates are considered to be statistically unreliable. For this reason, there is no highlighted breakdown analysis.

**Table 3.16: Use of barbiturates<sup>(a)</sup>: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation			
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998		
							(per cent)		(mean years)	
<b>Males</b>										
14–19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20–29	5.5	4.8	—	1.5 *	—	—	16.0	19.9		
30–39	10.5	5.2	—	0.7 *	—	—	15.4	21.0		
40+	1.2	2.3 *	—	—	—	—	28.0	19.0 *		
18–34	8.6	4.4	—	1.4 *	—	—	15.2	21.2		
20–39	8.3	5.0	—	1.1 *	—	—	15.5	20.7		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.2</b>	—	<b>0.5 *</b>	—	—	<b>17.3</b>	<b>20.2</b>		
<b>Females</b>										
14–19	—	1.2 *	—	—	—	—	—	—		
20–29	6.2	5.3	2.0	0.7 *	2.0	—	18.5	18.3		
30–39	2.4	—	—	—	—	—	19.0	—		
40+	0.3	—	—	—	—	—	30.0	—		
18–34	4.6	3.5	1.1	0.4 *	1.1	—	18.5	18.3		
20–39	4.2	2.6	0.9	0.4 *	0.9	—	18.5	18.3		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>1.2 *</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.1 *</b>	<b>0.4</b>	—	<b>19.8</b>	<b>18.3 *</b>		
<b>Persons</b>										
14–19	—	0.6 *	—	—	—	—	—	—		
20–29	5.9	5.0	1.0	1.1 *	1.0	—	17.4	18.7		
30–39	6.5	2.6 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	15.6	21.0 *		
40+	0.8	1.1 *	—	—	—	—	28.5	19.0 *		
18–34	6.6	4.0	0.6	0.9 *	0.6	—	16.2	19.6		
20–39	6.2	3.8	0.5	0.7 *	0.5	—	16.4	19.6		
<b>All ages</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.3 *</b>	<b>0.2</b>	—	<b>18.0</b>	<b>19.5</b>		

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) For non-medical purposes.

## Use of steroids

The proportion of Western Australians that have ever used steroids appears to have increased slightly from 0.5% in 1995 to 0.7% in 1998 (Table 3.17). However, these estimates are considered to be statistically unreliable. For this reason, there is no highlighted breakdown analysis.

**Table 3.17: Use of steroids<sup>(a)</sup>: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1995, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use		Last 12 months		Last 4 weeks		Age of initiation	
	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998	1995	1998
							(per cent)	
<b>Males</b>								
14–19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20–29	—	1.4 *	—	—	—	—	—	21.0 *
30–39	2.3	1.6 *	—	0.7 *	—	—	29.0	21.0 *
40+	—	1.3 *	—	—	—	—	—	26.0 *
18–34	1.6	1.3 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	29.0	21.0 *
20–39	1.3	1.5 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	29.0	21.0 *
<b>All ages</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.2 *</b>	—	<b>0.1 *</b>	—	—	<b>29.0</b>	<b>23.8 *</b>
<b>Females</b>								
14–19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20–29	—	0.7 *	—	0.7 *	—	—	—	17.0 *
30–39	1.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
40+	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
18–34	1.1	0.4 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	—	17.0 *
20–39	0.9	0.4 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	—	17.0 *
<b>All ages</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.1 *</b>	—	<b>0.1 *</b>	—	—	—	<b>17.0 *</b>
<b>Persons</b>								
14–19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20–29	—	1.1 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	—	19.6 *
30–39	2.0	0.8 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	29.0	21.0 *
40+	—	0.6 *	—	—	—	—	—	26.0 *
18–34	1.3	0.9 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	29.0	19.6 *
20–39	1.1	0.9 *	—	0.4 *	—	—	29.1	20.1 *
<b>All ages</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.7 *</b>	—	<b>0.1 *</b>	—	—	<b>29.2</b>	<b>23.0 *</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) For non-medical purposes.

## Injecting drug use

In 1998, the proportion of the Western Australian population aged 14 years and over who reported injecting an illicit drug at some stage in their life was 3% (Table 3.18).

**Table 3.18: Injecting drug use: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, and mean age of initiation, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use (per cent)	Last 12 months	Age of initiation (mean years)
<b>Males</b>			
14–19	1.5 *	1.5 *	14.0 *
20–29	12.6	11.7	21.3
30–39	5.5	1.7 *	20.1
40+	0.9 *	—	19.0 *
18–34	8.6	8.0	21.7
20–39	9.0	6.7	20.9
<b>All ages</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>20.5</b>
<b>Females</b>			
14–19	3.9	1.2 *	15.2
20–29	3.1 *	2.4 *	19.9 *
30–39	3.4	0.6 *	23.8
40+	—	—	—
18–34	3.1	1.8 *	19.1
20–39	3.3	1.5 *	21.9
<b>All ages</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0.7 *</b>	<b>20.3</b>
<b>Persons</b>			
14–19	2.7	1.3 *	14.9
20–29	7.9	7.1	21.0
30–39	4.4	1.1 *	21.5
40+	0.4 *	—	19.0 *
18–34	5.8	4.9	21.0
20–39	6.2	4.1	21.2
<b>All ages</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>20.4</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.

- Males (4.4%) in Western Australia were more than twice as likely to have injected an illicit drug at some stage in their life than females (1.8%).
- In 1998, approximately 2% of persons in Western Australia had injected an illicit drug within the last 12 months.
- Males (3%) were more likely than females (0.7%) to have injected an illicit drug in the last 12 months.
- The mean age of initiation for West Australians in 1998 for injecting illicit drugs was 20.4 years.

## Injecting drug use: first and recent

Overwhelmingly, the first drug injected was amphetamines, followed by heroin (Table 3.19).

**Table 3.19: Injecting drug use: first and recent<sup>(a)</sup> illicit drugs injected, proportion of the injecting population aged 14 years and over, by sex, Western Australia, 1998**

Drug	First injected <sup>(b)</sup>			Recently injected <sup>(c)</sup>		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	(per cent)					
Heroin	14.8	21.0	16.6	13.2	35.9	17.8
Methadone	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other opiates	4.0	—	2.9	11.0	—	8.8
Amphetamines	81.2	56.7	74.1	88.9	100.0	97.8
Cocaine	—	14.5	4.2	7.3	19.9	9.8
Hallucinogens	—	—	—	11.9	—	9.5
Ecstasy	—	—	—	7.3	—	5.8
Benzodiazepines	—	—	—	5.1	—	4.1
Steroids	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other	—	7.8	2.3	—	11.1	2.2

(a) Used in the last 12 months.

(b) Base equals respondents who have ever injected.

(c) Base equals respondents who have injected in the last 12 months.

- Approximately three in four persons (74%) in Western Australia aged 14 years or older who had injected illicit drugs first injected amphetamines. Males (81%) who had injected illicit drugs were more likely than females (57%) to have injected amphetamines as their first drug.
- The most common drug recently injected overall was amphetamines (98%).
- The second most common drug injected in 1998 was heroin, with 18% of injecting drug users injecting this drug.

## Use of any illicit drug

In 1998, the proportion of the Western Australian population aged 14 years and over who had ever used an illicit drug was 51% (Table 3.20).

**Table 3.20: Use of any illicit drug<sup>(a)</sup>: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use	Last 12 months	Last 4 weeks
(per cent)			
<b>Males</b>			
14–19	49.2	33.7	21.6
20–29	81.9	69.6	41.0
30–39	62.9	21.7	12.3
40+	39.8	13.6	6.2
18–34	76.2	53.9	31.3
20–39	72.4	45.6	26.7
<b>All ages</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>16.5</b>
<b>Females</b>			
14–19	51.8	37.3	12.3
20–29	68.7	30.2	11.8
30–39	66.2	28.3	5.2
40+	31.6	11.7	5.0
18–34	69.3	30.5	11.7
20–39	67.5	29.2	8.4
<b>All ages</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>7.2</b>
<b>Persons</b>			
14–19	50.4	35.4	17.1
20–29	75.4	50.3	26.7
30–39	64.6	25.0	8.8
40+	35.6	12.6	5.6
18–34	72.7	42.1	21.4
20–39	69.9	37.5	17.6
<b>All ages</b>	<b>51.4</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>11.8</b>

\* RSE greater than 50%.

(a) Illicit drugs, drugs and volatile substances used illicitly, and pharmaceuticals used for non-medical purposes.

- Males (48%) in Western Australia aged 14 years and over were more likely to have ever used an illicit drug than females (42%).
- The age group 20–29 years reported the highest lifetime use of at least one illicit drug (73%).
- In 1998, the proportion of the West Australian population aged 14 years and over that had used an illicit drug in the last 12 months was 22%.
- Males (27%) were more likely than females (17%) to have used an illicit drug in the last 12 months.
- Approximately 11% of the Western Australian population aged 14 years and over had used an illicit drug in the last 4 weeks.
- Males (17%) were almost 3 times as likely to have used an illicit drug in the last 4 weeks as females (6%).

## Use of any illicit drug other than cannabis

The proportion of the Western Australian population in 1998 aged 14 years and over who had ever used any illicit drug other than cannabis was 16% (Table 3.21).

**Table 3.21: Use of any illicit drug<sup>(a)</sup> other than cannabis: proportion of the population aged 14 years and over, by age and sex, Western Australia, 1998**

Age groups	Lifetime use	Last 12 months	Last 4 weeks
(per cent)			
<b>Males</b>			
14–19	29.3	18.1	2.0
20–29	64.2	50.2	5.7
30–39	30.8	7.8	1.1
40+	18.1	5.1	2.1
18–34	49.5	35.4	4.2
20–39	47.5	29.0	3.4
<b>All ages</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>2.6</b>
<b>Females</b>			
14–19	18.5	16.0	3.8
20–29	36.6	12.8	6.3
30–39	23.9	11.5	2.6
40+	12.5	5.6	3.1
18–34	27.8	11.0	5.5
20–39	30.1	12.1	4.4
<b>All ages</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Persons</b>			
14–19	24.0	17.1	2.9
20–29	50.7	31.8	6.0
30–39	27.3	9.7	1.9
40+	15.3	5.3	2.6
18–34	38.6	23.1	4.9
20–39	38.9	20.7	3.9
<b>All ages</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>3.2</b>

(a) Illicit drugs, drugs and volatile substances used illicitly, and pharmaceuticals used for non-medical purposes.

- In 1998, males (23%) were more than twice as likely as females (9%) to have used an illicit drug other than cannabis in their lifetime.
- Approximately 9% of West Australians had used an illicit drug other than cannabis in the last 12 months.
- In the last 12 months, males (13%) were more than 3 times as likely as females (4%) to have used an illicit drug.
- In 1998, the proportion of the Western Australian population that had used an illicit drug other than cannabis in the last 4 weeks was approximately 1%.

## Source of supply

Illicit drugs were almost always first sourced from friends and acquaintances, with little movement away from initial sources during the course of drug use (Table 3.22).

**Table 3.22: Source of first and recent supply of illicit drugs, by drug, Western Australia, 1998**

Drug	Friend or acquaintance		Relative		Spouse or partner		Street dealer		Other	
	First <sup>(a)</sup>	Now <sup>(b)</sup>	First	Now	First	Now	First	Now	First	Now
	(per cent)									
Cannabis	88.9	80.8	5.6	0.5	2.9	2.0	1.9	10.8	0.7	6.0
Analgesics <sup>(c)</sup>	31.9	15.4	10.3	3.0	2.0	—	2.5	—	53.3 <sup>(d)</sup>	81.6 <sup>(d)</sup>
Tranquillisers <sup>(c)</sup>	61.1	15.9	16.2	—	—	—	—	—	22.7 <sup>(d)</sup>	84.1 <sup>(d)</sup>
Steroids <sup>(c)</sup>	50.3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	49.7 <sup>(d)</sup>	—
Barbiturates <sup>(c)</sup>	60.6	—	5.2	—	—	—	25.0	—	9.2 <sup>(d)</sup>	—
Inhalants	75.8	11.3	2.2	—	—	—	—	—	22.0	88.7
Heroin	100.0	100.0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Methadone <sup>(e)</sup>	84.7	—	—	—	—	—	15.3	—	—	—
Amphetamines <sup>(c)</sup>	84.4	73.8	3.4	9.4	2.5	4.6	9.7	12.2	—	—
Cocaine	83.5	86.1	1.6	—	—	—	15.0	13.9	—	—
Natural hallucinogens	69.8	71.1	—	—	—	—	10.6	20.8	19.6 <sup>(f)</sup>	8.1 <sup>(f)</sup>
LSD	88.5	82.7	1.5	—	0.8	—	8.3	17.3	0.9	—
Ecstasy, designer drugs	85.3	95.6	2.4	—	1.4	—	10.9	4.4	—	—

(a) Base equals respondents ever used.

(b) Base equals respondents using in the last 12 months.

(c) For non-medical use.

(d) Includes doctor's script.

(e) Non-maintenance.

(f) Includes from fields.

Note: Base for first supply equals respondents ever used; recent supply equals respondents using in last 12 months.

## First suppliers of illicit drugs

Overwhelmingly, the first suppliers of illicit drugs were friends or acquaintances.

- Nearly nine out of every 10 illicit drug users first obtained **cannabis** (89%), **heroin** (100%), **amphetamines** (84%), **cocaine** (84%), **LSD** (89%) and **ecstasy** (85%) from friends and acquaintances.
- **Steroids** were first sourced from friends or acquaintances by 50% of users, **inhalants** by 76% and **methadone** by 85% of drug users.

Exceptions to the predominance of friends and acquaintances were the common pharmaceuticals, where their availability by prescription was an apparent alternative first source.

## Recent suppliers of illicit drugs

Friends and acquaintances remained the primary source for most illicit drugs. Exceptions were:

- **Analgesics** (82%), **tranquillisers** (84%) and **inhalants** (89%) where the majority of recent supplies were obtained from 'other' sources, e.g. doctors' prescriptions.