

Solitary Drinking on the Rise: Study Reveals Americans Turning to Alcohol to Manage Emotions

The new survey explores the motivations behind America's solitary drinking habits.

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Delaware tops the nation for solitary drinking, averaging 5.1 solo sessions per month.

- Nearly 1 in 5 Americans drink to escape personal problems.
- 58% of Americans prefer drinking alone at home.
- Over 1 in 4 Americans drink to cope with stress and anxiety.

A new nationally representative survey commissioned by medical home detox provider [Elite Home Detox](#) sheds light on the emotional and psychological reasons why millions of Americans are drinking alone.

While many associate alcohol with social settings, one of the earliest warning signs of dependency is frequent solitary drinking—a behavior that often goes unnoticed. Contrary to the common assumption that solitary drinking is driven by preference or leisure, the top reason—cited by over half of respondents—was simply a desire to unwind after a long day. This suggests alcohol is often used as a coping mechanism rather than a social one—raising red flags about its role in daily stress management.

Other notable motivations include:



Elite Home Detox Logo

Top Reasons To Drink Alone



“The survey reveals that alcohol is used to manage difficult emotions, functioning as a psychological support mechanism.”

Source: 2025 Elite Home Detox Survey



Where and When Solitary Drinking Happens

- Over 25% drink to manage stress, anxiety, or emotional hardship.
- Nearly 1 in 5 turn to alcohol to avoid or escape personal problems.
- 16% say drinking alone has become habitual.
- 13% drink alone to avoid interacting with others.
- Alaska and Delaware Top the List for Most Monthly Alcohol Use



While moderate drinking is common, the survey reveals that a significant portion of Americans drink to the point of intoxication with some regularity. In fact, 1 in 5 respondents report getting drunk 1–3 times per month, and smaller but notable groups drink heavily on a weekly basis. Adults aged 35–45 are most likely to report this behavior.

Regionally, Alaska and Delaware stand out with the highest monthly intoxication rates, suggesting local factors play a role. Gender differences also emerged, with men more likely than women to report drinking to excess. These findings underscore the complex nature of alcohol use in America—where many drink in moderation, yet a sizable minority engage in regular heavy drinking.

Solitary Drinking Is a Warning Sign

The survey also asked participants to describe, in their own words, why they drink alone. The results were sobering. Some admitted to drinking to mask chronic pain or insomnia, while others shared more traumatic stories. One respondent simply wrote: “Spouse’s recent homicide.” Another said: “It helps with leg pain.” A third cited, “boredom,” revealing the emotional emptiness that sometimes underlies the habit.

These responses highlight an uncomfortable truth: solitary drinking is often less a lifestyle choice and more a symptom of unresolved emotions, unmet needs, or a lack of healthier outlets. Unlike social drinking, which is visible and normalized, solitary drinking often remains hidden until it escalates into dependence.

“Solitary drinking isn’t about enjoyment,” explains Dr. Abe Malkin, Founder of Elite Home Detox and a member of the American Society of Addiction Medicine. “It’s a means of emotional survival—people turn to alcohol not to enhance their lives, but to shield themselves from pain, boredom, loneliness, or grief. By the time someone realizes that alcohol has become their primary coping mechanism, the habit is already deeply ingrained. That’s why it’s crucial to create safe, stigma-free environments where individuals can seek help and truly be heard.”

Additional insights from the survey are available at <https://elitehomedetox.com/solitary-drinking-hidden-crisis>

About Elite Home Detox: Elite Home Detox is a premier provider of in-home addiction recovery and wellness services across the United States. Specializing in medically supervised detox, personalized treatment plans, and holistic support, we bring safe, confidential care directly to the comfort of your home. Our team of licensed professionals is dedicated to making recovery accessible, private, and effective—whether you need assistance with alcohol, opioids, or other substances. To learn more about our services, visit www.elitehomedetox.com.

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