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**Substance abuse in Iraq: snap shot on  
clinical and statistical facts**

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# Global statistics

According to the United Nations world drug report, in 2021 globally around 275 million individuals used illegal substances, and 13% of abusers suffered from drug use disorders. The global prevalence of prohibited substances in 2019 was 5.5%. The global statistics report in 2021 stated, over 11 million populations, are estimated to use injectable drugs, most of them were suffering from hepatitis.

# Global statistics

As reported in the World Drug Report 2022 (WDR 2022), amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), including amphetamine and methamphetamine, rank as the second most commonly abused illicit substances worldwide, trailing only cannabis .

# Cannabis القنب (الحشيش)



Captagon available as tablet  
(01 pills)



Amphetamine available as  
powder or tablet (crystal)





# World Health Organization statistics

- ✓ **Nicotine:** WHO reported that approximately one billion people smoke tobacco worldwide.
- ✓ **Alcohol:** WHO reveals that 67.5 million people suffer from alcohol related disorders.
- ✓ **Illicit drugs (Amphetamine, Cannabis, Cocaine and opioids):** An estimated 208 million people (nearly 5% of the world's population) between the ages of 15 and 64 years consume illegal drugs.

**144 million** people abuse cannabis (marijuana), making it the most prevalent illicit substance, followed by amphetamine type stimulants, opiates and cocaine.

**35 million** used amphetamine type stimulants, **16 million** are opiates and **13 million** are cocaine users.



✓ **Licit drugs (prescription drug misuse):**

Prescription medicines are the **second** most misused class of drugs after cannabis, and it has been predicted that misuse of these substances will soon exceed illicit drug use. Approximately **6%** of the U.S. population (**15.1 million** ) reported abusing controlled prescription drugs.

- ✓ Abuse of controlled prescription drugs has been increasing at a rate twice that of marijuana, five times greater than cocaine and 60 times greater than heroin.
- ✓ Concerning drug-related mortality, in 2021, 106,699 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States.

# Epidemiology of substance abuse in Iraq

- Before 2003, Iraq was one of the cleanest countries regarding substance abuse (WHO, 2002).
- Since 2003, there have been increasing rates of alcohol and illicit drug abuse, especially among **young**, uneducated **males** who live in poor and disadvantaged areas and also **among the military**.



*World Psychiatry*. 2009 Jun; 8(2): 97–109.

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### The prevalence and correlates of DSM-IV disorders in the Iraq Mental Health Survey (IMHS)

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ON BEHALF OF THE IRAQ MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY STUDY GROUP

**The Iraqi Mental Health Survey** found lifetime alcohol abuse was **6.8%** among men and **0.6%** among women, and the lifetime prevalence of licit drug misuse was **0.7%**



Research Report

## Self-reported substance use in Iraq: findings from the Iraqi National Household Survey of Alcohol and Drug Use, 2014

Nesif Al-Hemiery, Rufaidah Dabbagh ,  
Mushtaq T. Hashim, Salih Al-Hasnawi, Ali Abutiheen,  
Emad A. Abdulghani, Jawad K. Al-Diwan, Neeraj Kak,  
Hala Al Mossawi, Jane Carlisle Maxwell,  
Mary-Lynn Brecht, Valerie Antonini, Albert Hasson,  
Richard A. Rawson

➤ **The Iraqi National Household Survey on Alcohol and Drug Use (INHSAD)** revealed that lifetime tobacco use was **28.8%**, lifetime alcohol use was **8.1%**, **2.9%** was licit drugs, and **0.3%** was illicit drug use.

- ✓ **Iraqi Family Health Survey(2008) and the Iraqi Ministry of Health Non-communicable Disease Risk Factor Survey(2013)** reported tobacco use to be 14.8% and 21.9% respectively.
- ✓ **Alcohol and drug abuse in post-conflict Iraq (Al-Hemiary et al, 2015)** , the lifetime prevalence of alcohol abuse was 16.7%, exclusively in males.















