

# SUBSTANCE USE TRENDS & HEALTH OUTCOMES

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Colorado Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force  
August 8, 2020

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Barbara Gabella, MSPH  
Elyse Contreras, MPH  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

*Indicators  
tracked for  
the Colorado Consortium for  
Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention:  
Misuse and Overdose Deaths*

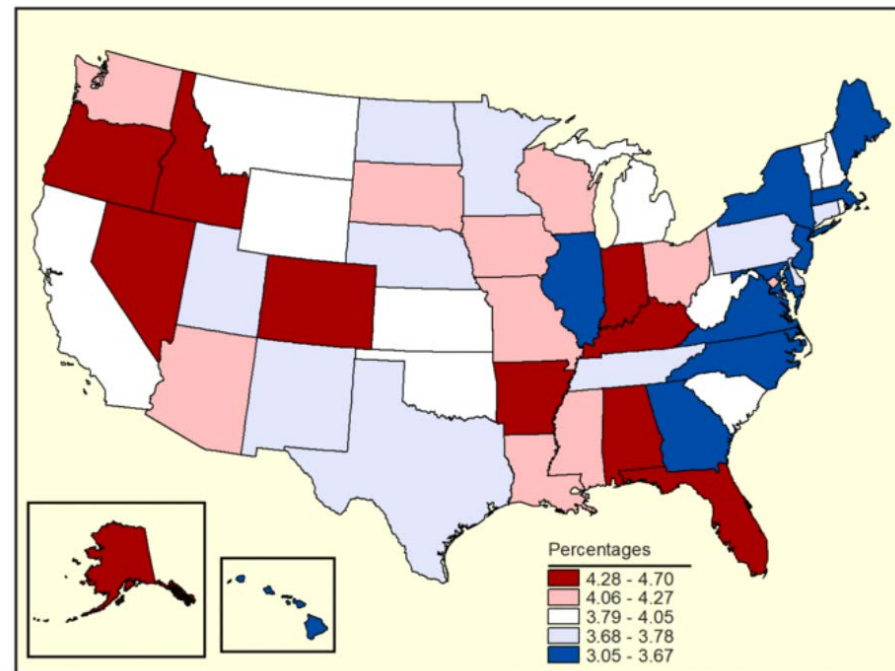
**Presenter: Barbara Gabella  
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment**



4.8% of Coloradans age 12 or older misused prescription pain relievers in the past year ...

or about 217,000 Coloradans in this age group

*Colorado is still in the **top tier** of states.*



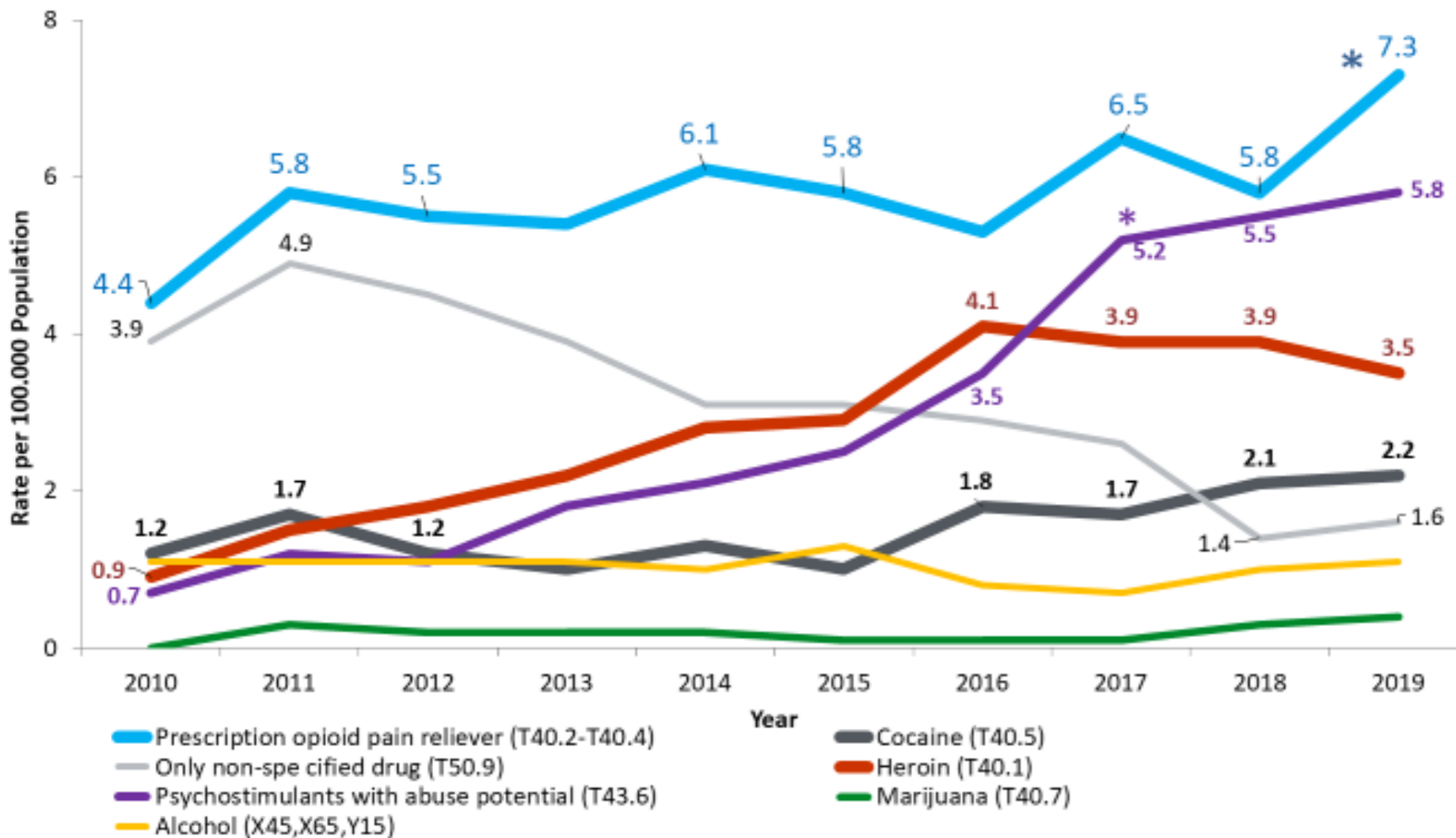
[www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2017-2018-nsduh-state-specific-tables](http://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2017-2018-nsduh-state-specific-tables)

And substate estimates at:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2016-2018-nsduh-national-maps-prevalence-estimates-substate-region>

# Health Impact: Drug overdose deaths

Age-adjusted rates, Colorado residents, 2010-2019



\*Statistically different from previous year

# 2019 Data Key Points

## Opioids

- The age-adjusted rate of prescription opioid overdose deaths, including fentanyl, increased to 7.3 deaths per 100,000 persons in 2019, from 6.5 deaths in 2018.
- From 2018-2019, the fentanyl death rate doubled in 1 year and contributed to more than half of the prescription opioid rate.
- Heroin death rate is stable from 2016-2019.
- Emergency department rates (not shown) were stable. In 2019, there were 35 visits for prescription opioid overdoses per 100,000 persons and 12 visits for heroin overdose per 100,000 persons.

## Other drugs

- In 2019, the age-adjusted rate of psychostimulant overdoses is 5.8 deaths per 100,000 persons, an increase from 3.5 deaths in 2016, and approaching the rate of prescription opioid overdoses.
- From 2012 through 2016, the psychostimulant overdose death rate slowly increased.
- The age-adjusted rate of cocaine overdoses was 2.2 deaths per 100,000 persons, similar to 2016-2018 rates. This rate might be leveling after a single-year doubling from 2015 to 2016.

# Data Resources

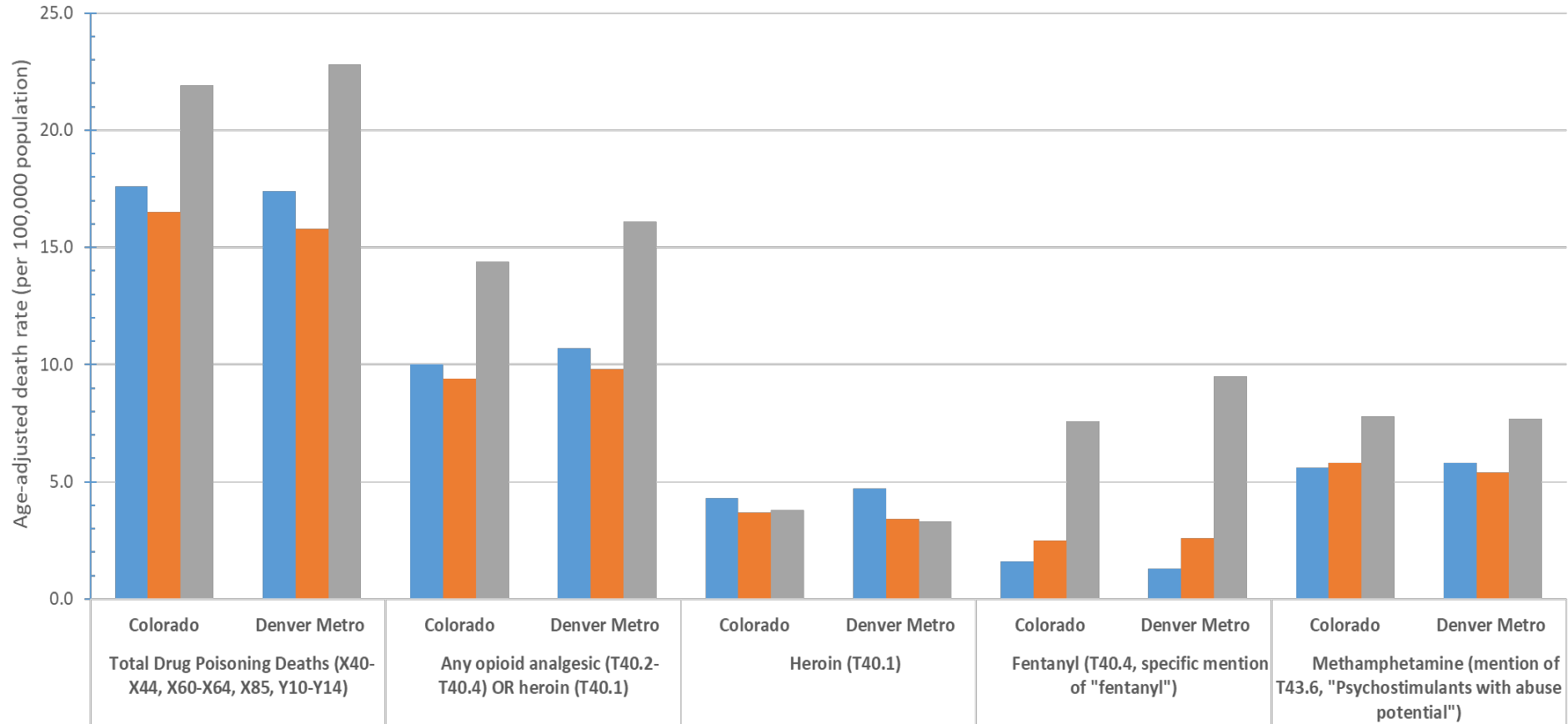
Where to access data?

- [CDPHE Drug Overdose dashboard](#)
- [Consortium Opioid Dashboard](#)
- [CDPHE Dashboards](#)
- [Open Data Portal](#)

Data sources used:

- Death certificates
- Hospitalizations & ED billing
- PDMP
- Treatment admissions for SUD
- National Survey on Drug Use and Health

## Drug poisoning/overdose death rates: Colorado and Denver Metro Area residents, January-May, 2018-2020



■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2020

9-County Denver Metro Area includes Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, Jefferson, Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties.  
 Data for 2020 are provisional, and subject to change.  
 Source: Vital Statistics Program, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

# Changes in Excessive Drinking during COVID-19 between February and April, United States

- Alcohol use, including excessive drinking, has increased nationally during COVID-19.
  - Average drinks per day increased 27 percent
  - Binge drinking increased by 26 percent
- Largest increases in excessive drinking observed in the Western U.S. (which includes Colorado)
- Significant increases among women, Black adults, and people with children.
- Alcohol weakens the immune system and could increase the risk of complications of COVID-19.



## SUMMARY: ALCOHOL

- Alcohol is still the most prevalently used substance in Colorado.
- Binge drinking among Coloradans is not just a youth or young adult issue.
- Nationally, excessive drinking has increased during COVID-19, which could increase alcohol-related harms.

# Updates in Monitoring Marijuana & Substance Use Trends in Colorado

Presenter: Elyse Contreras

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

# Population Surveys

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- Colorado Populations
  1. High school students
  2. Adults 18 years and older
  3. Pregnant women
- **Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS)**
  - Every 2 years, self-reported, school-based survey (HS & MS)
  - Largest survey asking about youth substance use in Colorado

# Population Health Trends

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- **Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)**
  - Annual self-reported, telephone-based survey (Adults 18+)
  - Largest survey asking about adult substance use in Colorado
  
- **Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)**
  - Annual survey of women who recently gave birth
  - Mail survey with telephone follow-up asks about many risk factors including substance use

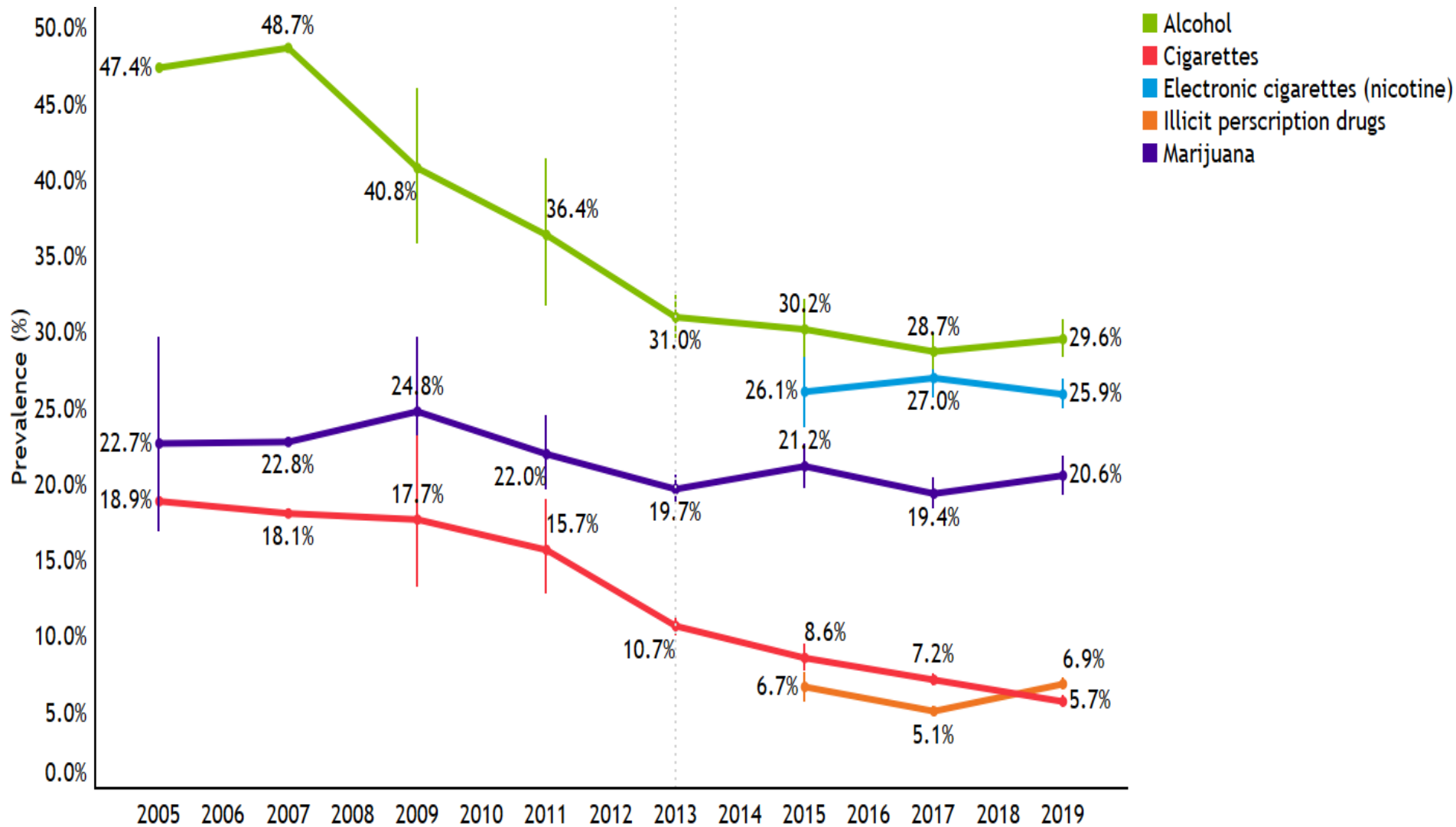




# Youth Substance Use & Trends



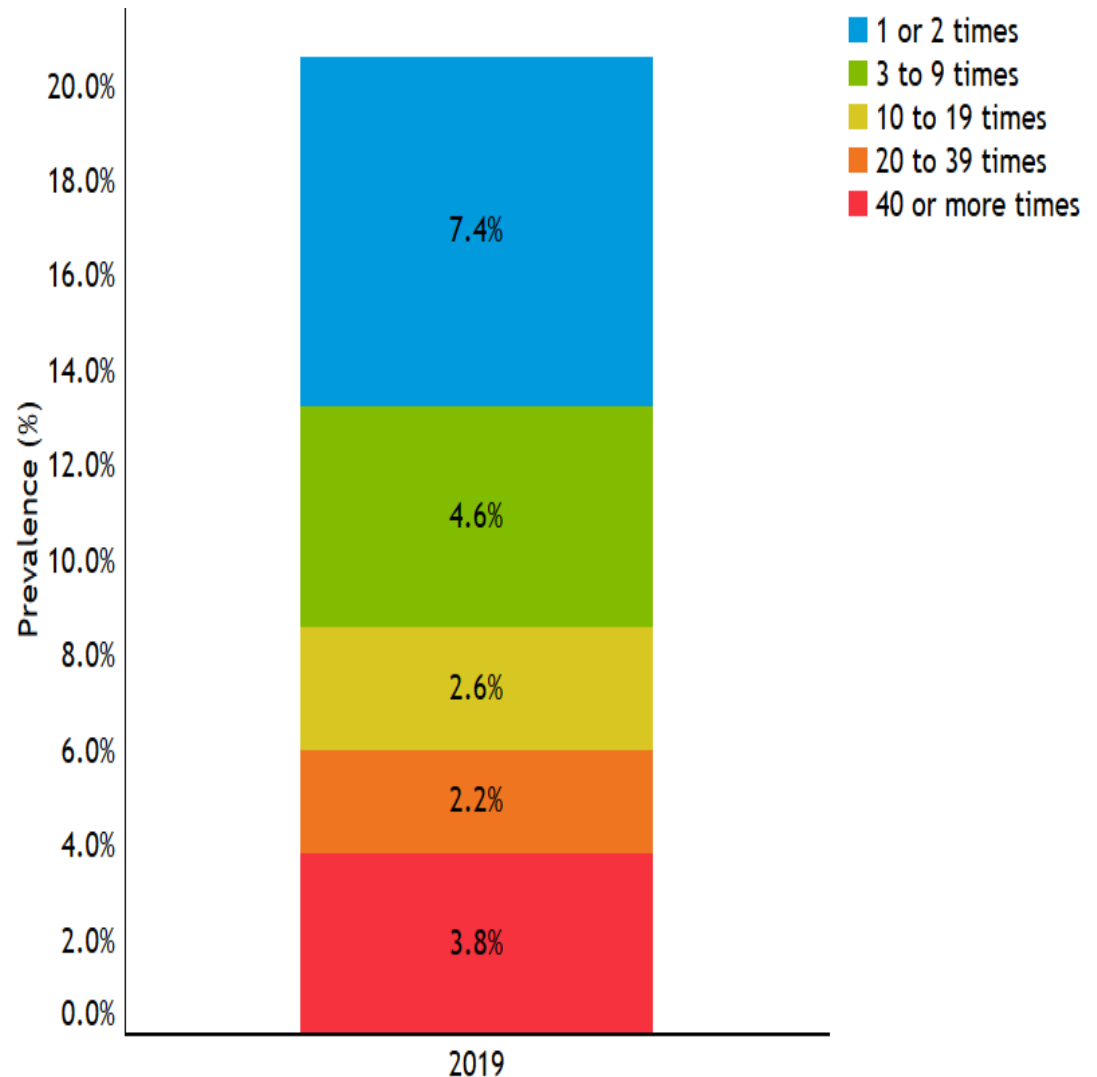
# Past 30 day substance use among high school students, Colorado 2005-2019



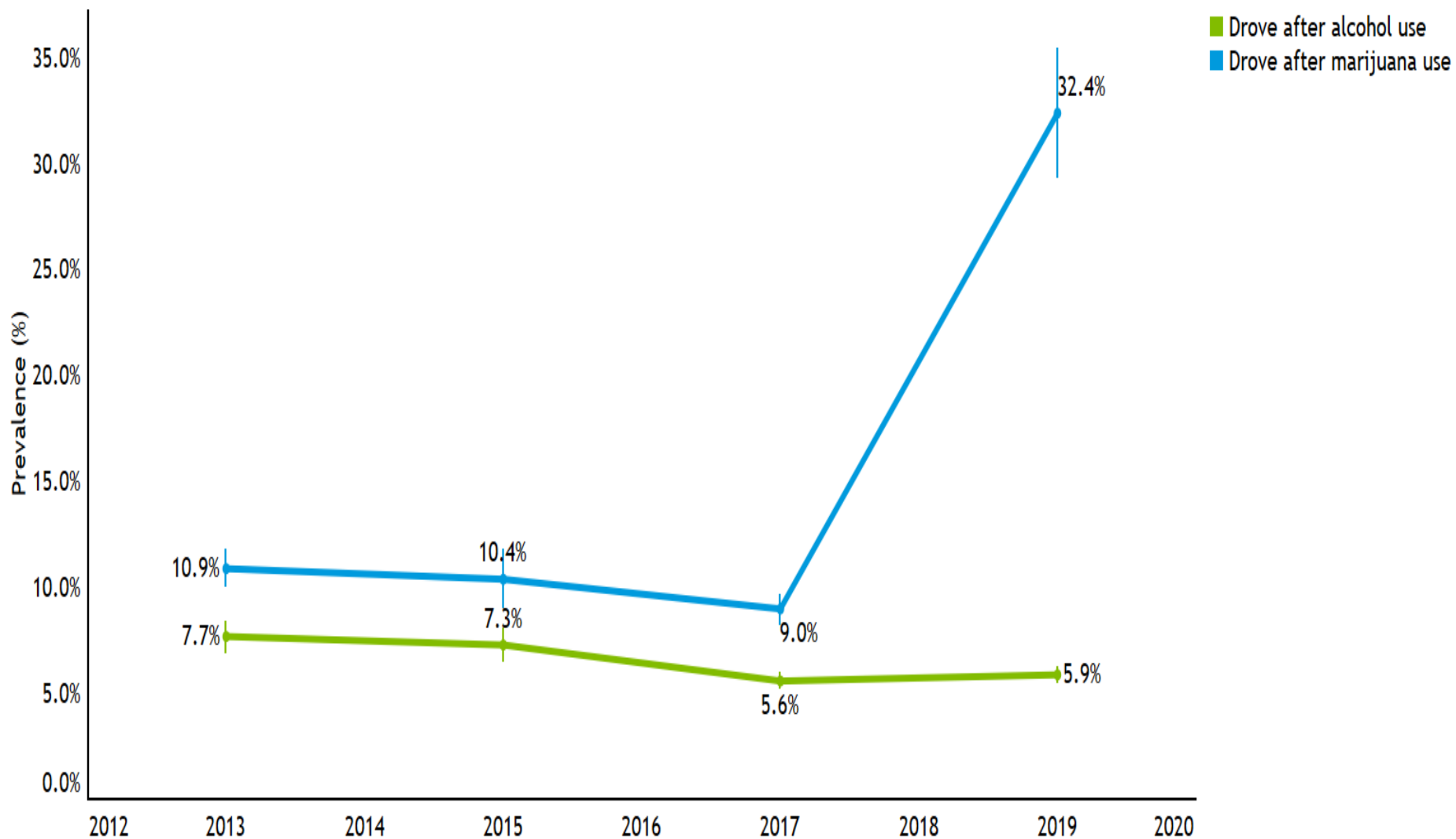
# Marijuana use among high school students, 2019

Lifetime  
**35.9%**

Past 30 Days  
**20.6%**



# Driving after substance use among high school students, 2013-2019





# Methods of Marijuana Consumption

## Method of use

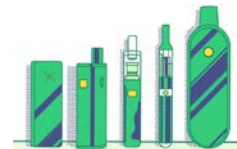
Any use of a method in the past 30 days

Can use multiple methods or other methods more

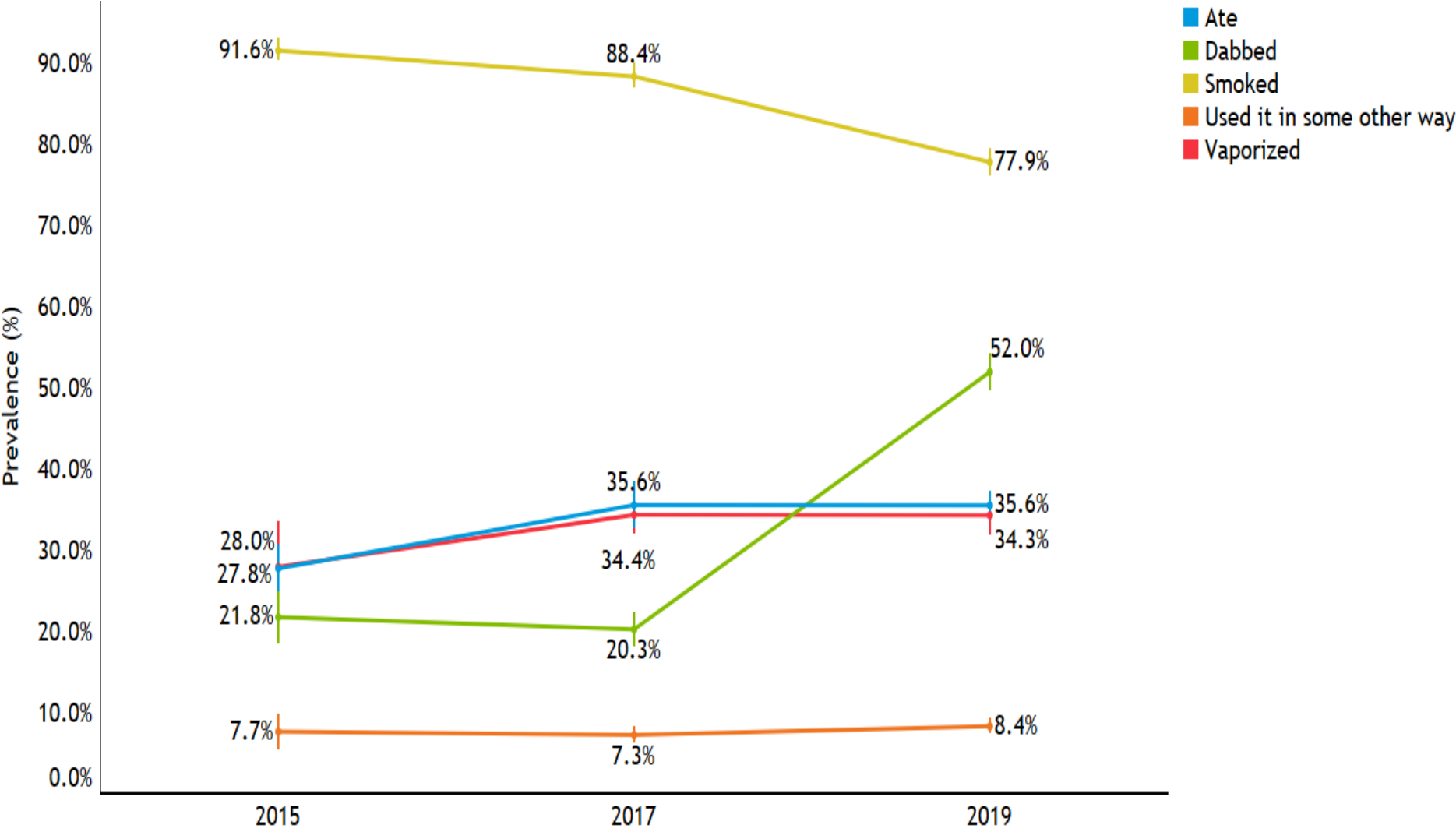
## Method of usual use

Method high school students usually used

Can use other methods, but consumed marijuana with this method the most in the past 30 days

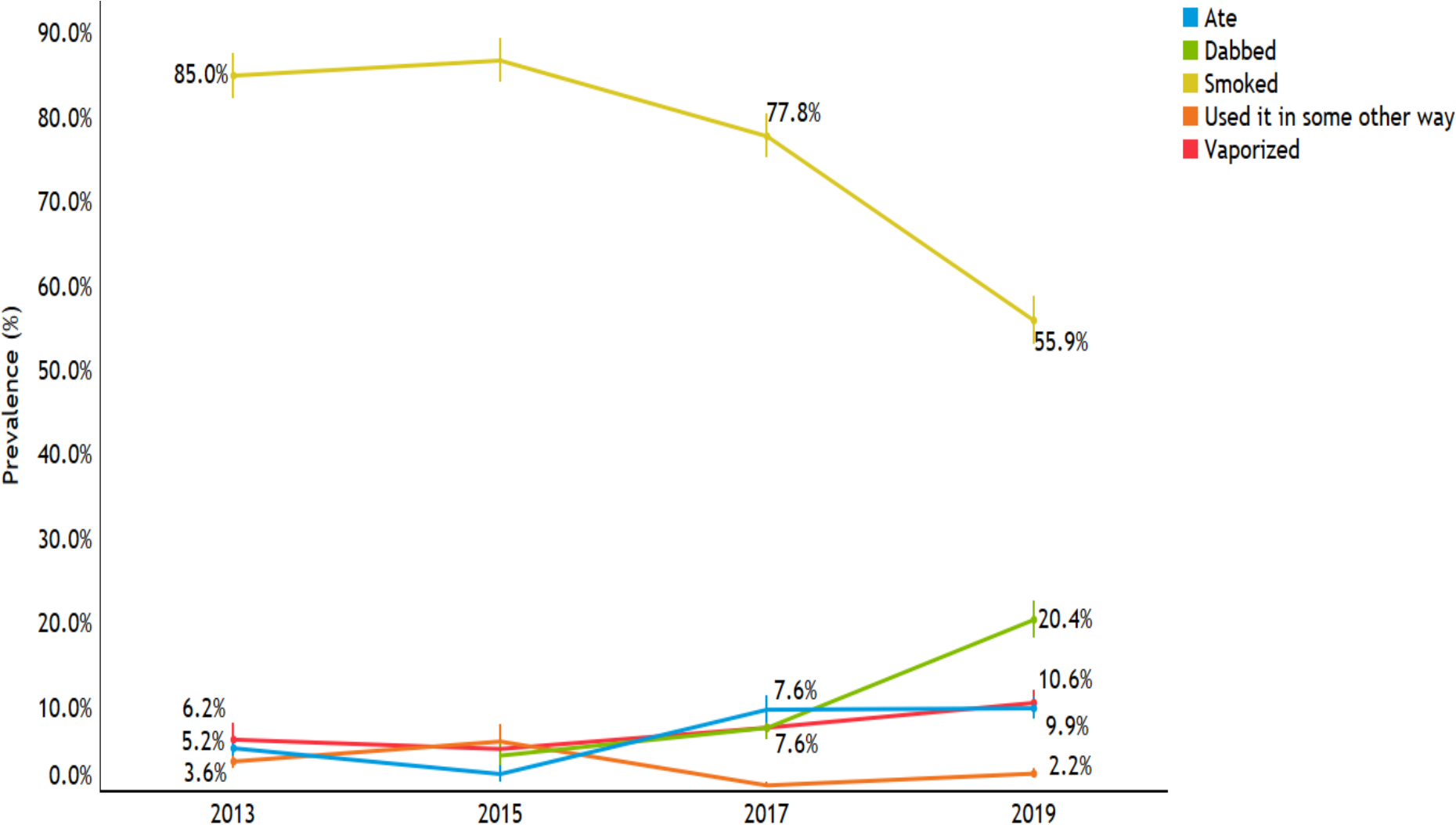


# Marijuana method of use among high school students currently using marijuana, 2015-2019



Produced by: Marijuana Health Monitoring Program, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment 2020  
 Data Sources: Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS)

# Marijuana method of usual use among high school students currently using marijuana, 2013-2019

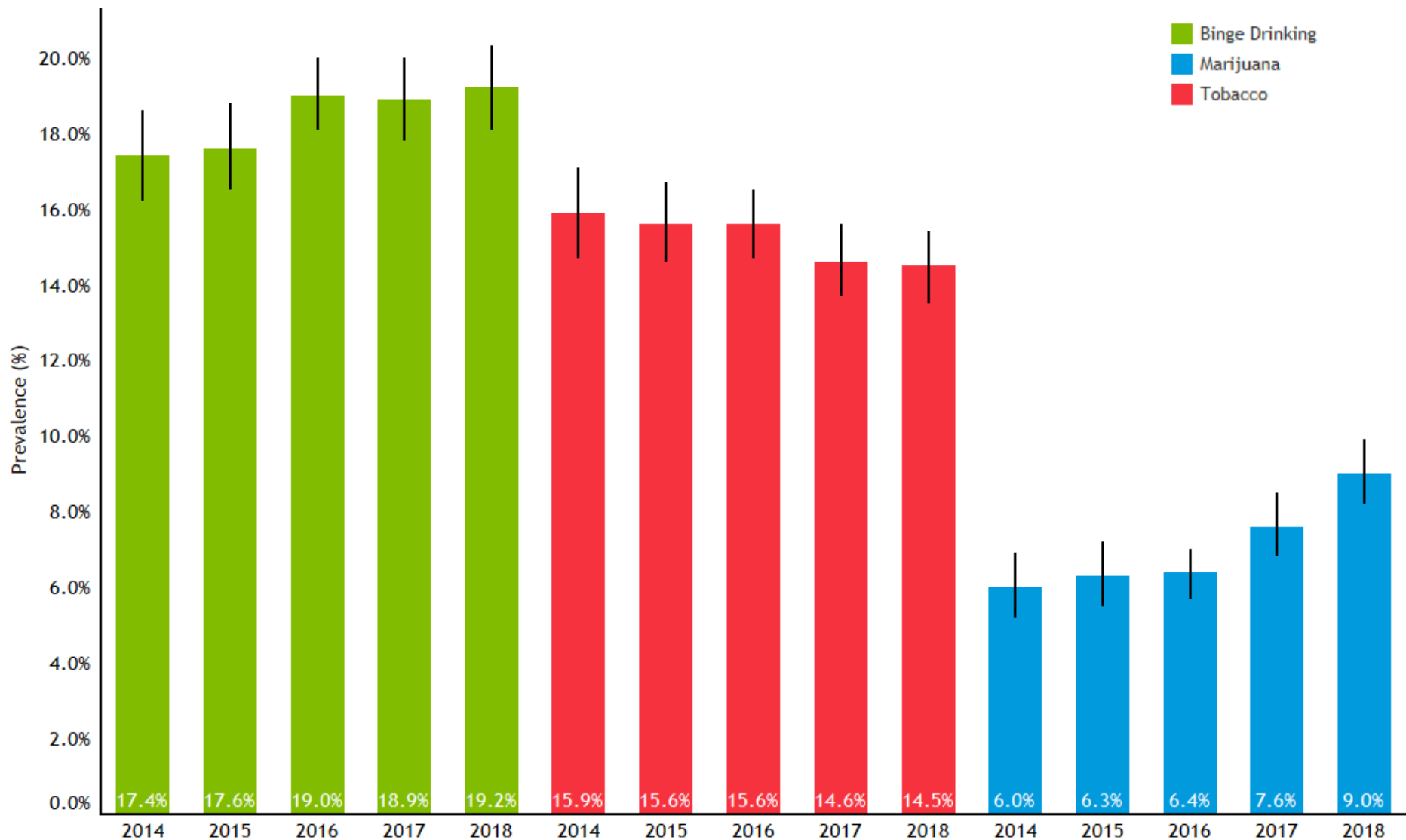


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## Adult Substance Use & Trends



# Daily or near daily substance use among adults, Colorado 2014-2018



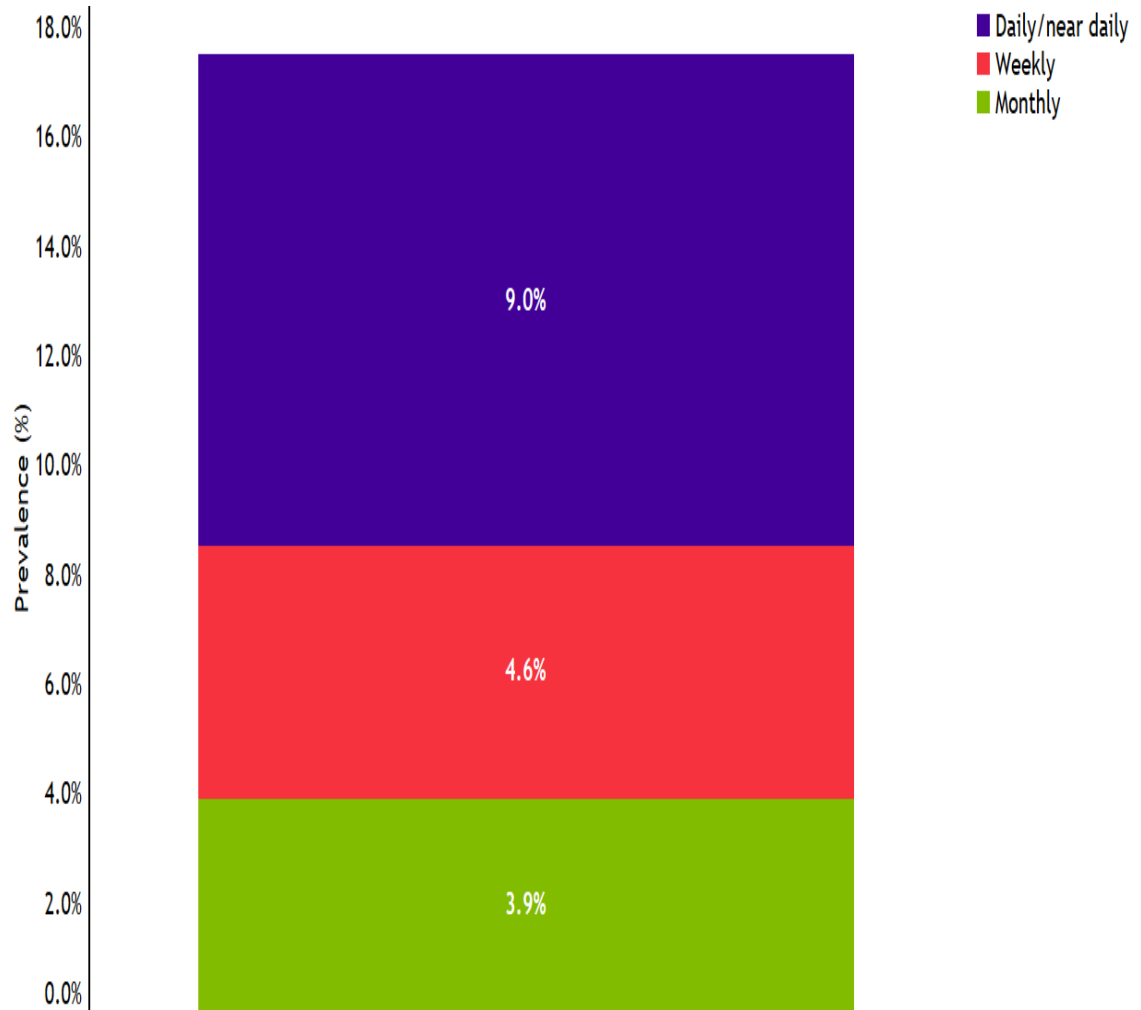
Produced by: Marijuana Health Monitoring Program, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment 2020

Data Sources: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS)

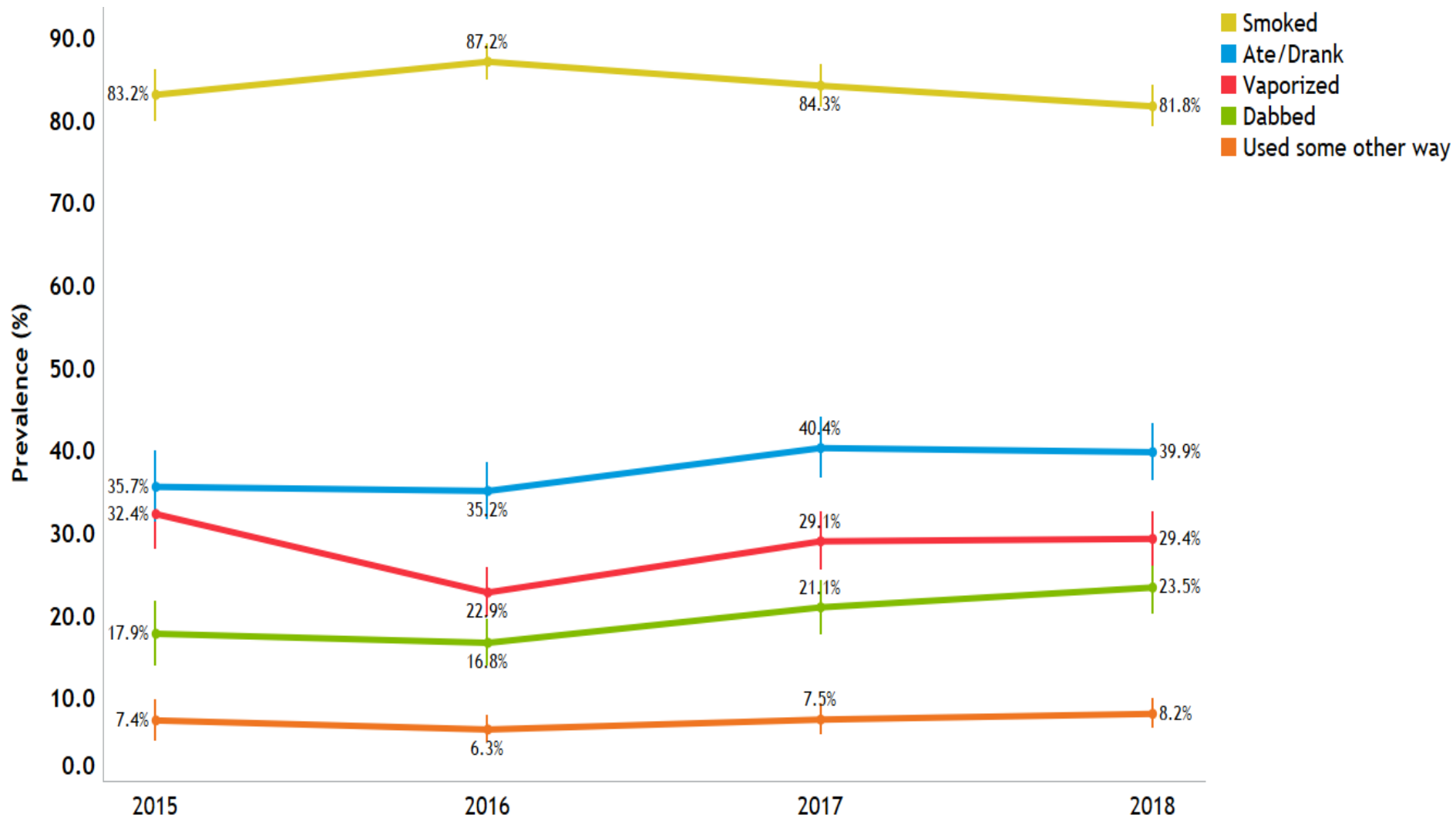
# Marijuana use among adults, Colorado 2018

Past 30 days  
**17.5%**

Driving after use  
**3.8%**



# Marijuana method of use among adults that currently use marijuana, 2015-2018

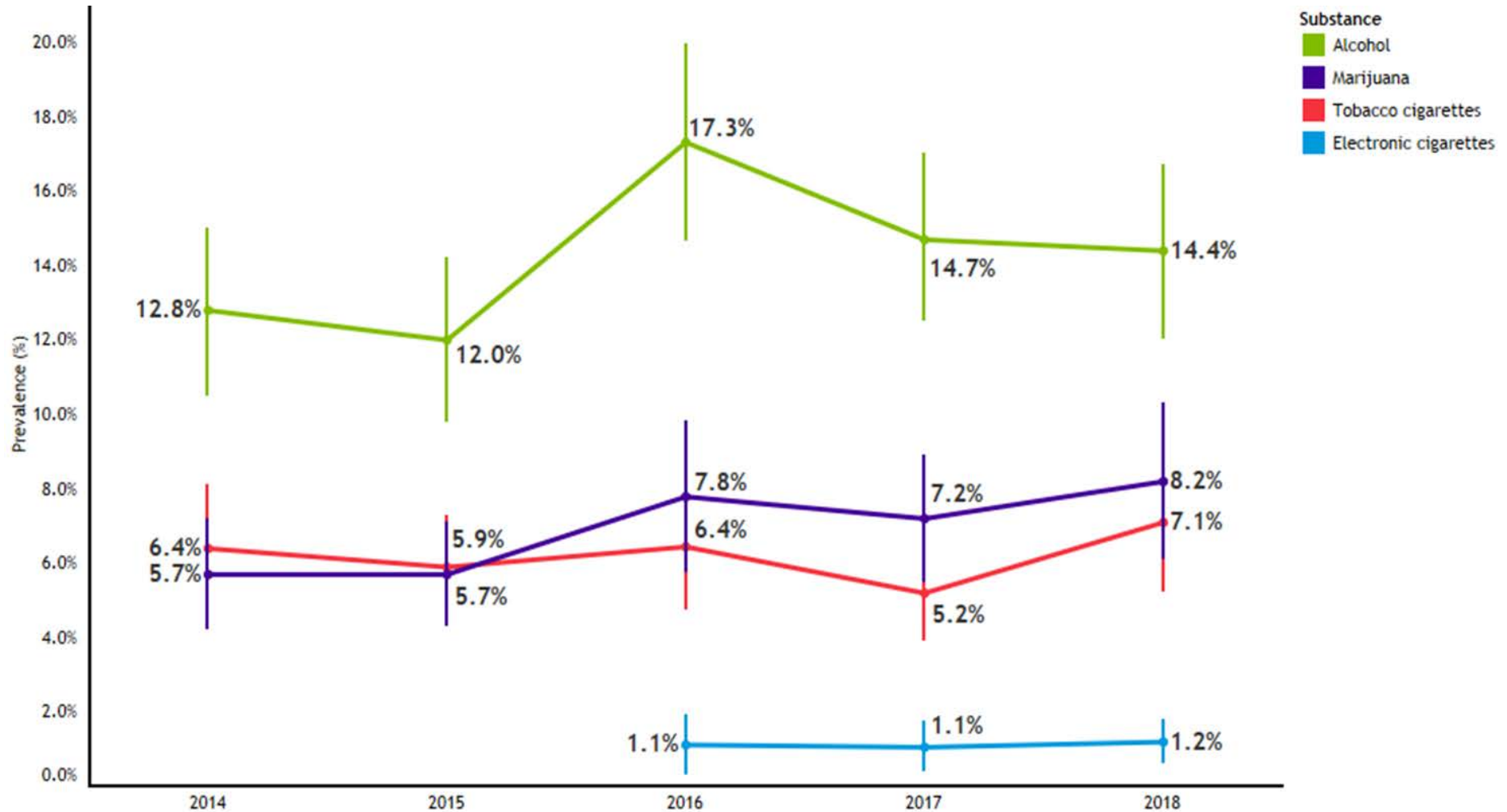


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# Substance Use During Pregnancy

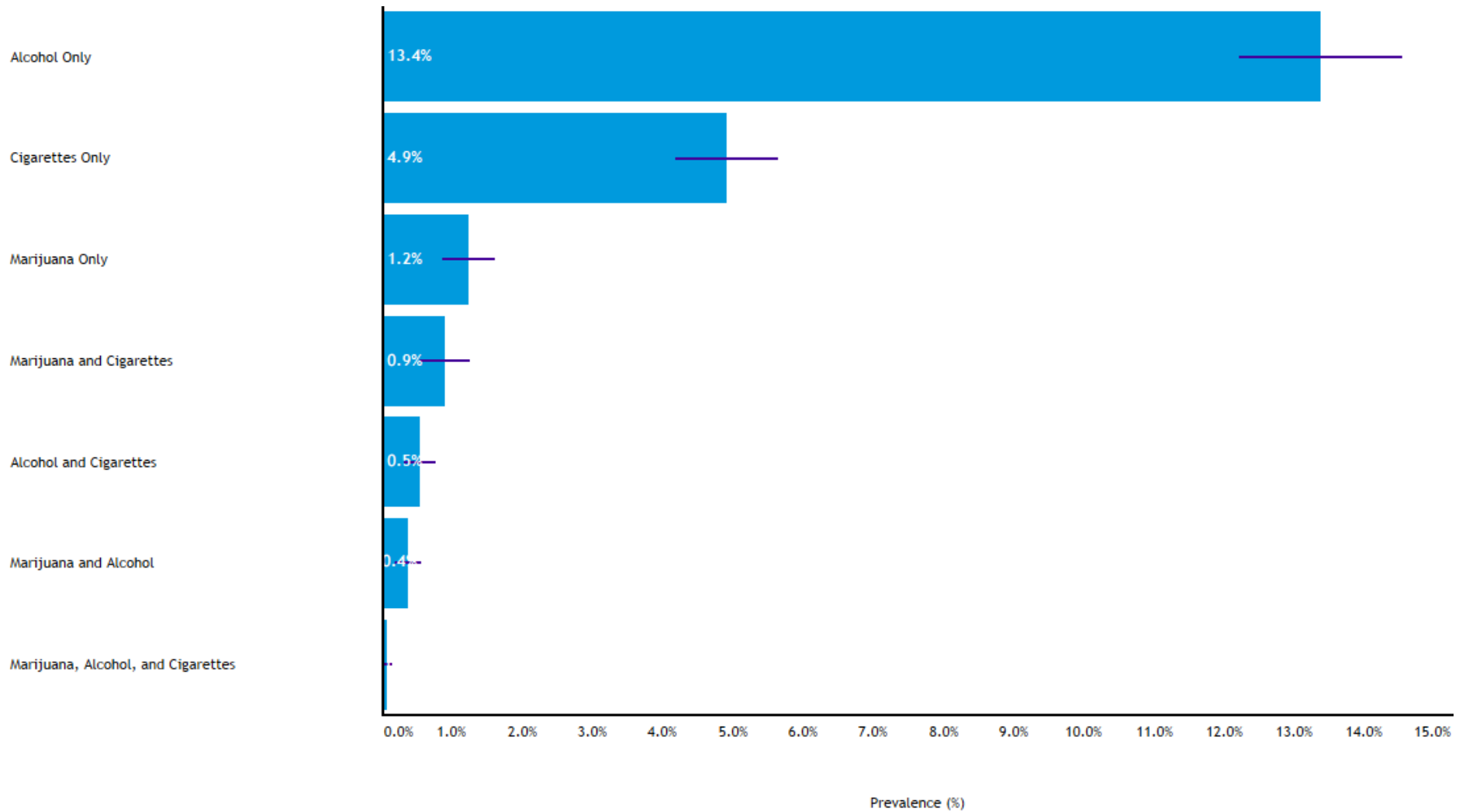


# Substance use during pregnancy, Colorado 2015-2018



\*During pregnancy is defined as the last three months of pregnancy for alcohol, cigarettes, and electronic cigarettes and calculated by combining the first 3 months, last 3 months, and at any time during pregnancy questions for marijuana

# Polysubstance use during pregnancy, Colorado 2015-2018



Due to low sample sizes, multiple survey years are aggregated together to decrease margins of error  
Percentages are the prevalence for the range of years

## SUMMARY: MARIJUANA

- Past 30 day use increasing for adults but not youth
- Driving after use is increasing for adults and youth
- Methods of consumption changing
- Use during pregnancy stable



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# E-cigarette or Vaping Associated Lung Injury (EVALI)



# EVALI Outbreak 2019

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- National Cases
  - 2807 cases, 68 deaths
  - 66% male
  - median age 24
  - 33% THC only
- Colorado Cases
  - 8 cases, 0 deaths
  - 87.5% male
  - median age 25
  - 38% THC only
- Strong associations
  - Vitamin E acetate, THC, informal sources
- Theories
  - Degradation of vaping devices
  - Changes in chemical composition of vaping liquids

# THANKS!

Barbara Gabella, MSPH

Senior Scientist in Injury Epidemiology

[barbara.gabella@state.co.us](mailto:barbara.gabella@state.co.us)

Elyse Contreras, MPH

Manager of Marijuana Health Monitoring & Research, Epidemiologist

[elyse.contreras@state.co.us](mailto:elyse.contreras@state.co.us)



**COLORADO**  
Department of Public  
Health & Environment

# Q & A