



Amongst the over 65's one in five are consuming alcohol at an 'unsafe' level, according to researchers.

The report analysed GP data of 27,991 over 65's living in London and warned that drinking more than the recommended amount, 14 units a week for women and 21 units a week for men, puts elderly people at the risk of falls and confusion.

In the studied data 9,248 people said that they drank alcohol, 21% of which drank more than the recommended limit.

The study, carried out by Dr Mark Ashworth, a primary care researcher and GP, revealed that the rates of unsafe drinking in the elderly were higher than those reported for the general population.

"Very few GPs are switched on to the idea that their older patients could be drinking at these levels - we all look out for it in younger patients, but we are less attuned to it in the elderly.

"What is uncertain from this study is whether people are drinking alone, or with friends at home, or down the pub." he said.

Just under half of the data analysed in the report was from men, 60% of which were drinkers and 65% of them were deemed as consuming unsafe levels of alcohol.

Out of the 5% who were consuming the highest levels of alcohol men were drinking 49 units a week and women 23 units a week.

The problem of unsafe drinking was more common amongst the white British and Irish population than those of Caribbean, African or Asian ethnic origin.

As stated in an article by the BBC Prof Mark Bellis, alcohol spokesman for the Faculty of Public Health said:

"It's easy for people to slip into a routine of drinking half a bottle of wine a night without knowing it increases their risks of health problems such as cancer and can take years off their life span.

"Having this information is especially important for older drinkers so that they can make informed decisions about their alcohol consumption at a time of life when risks of ill health often increase."

Source. [The BBC](#)