

CLINICAL TRIAL RESULTS SUMMARY

REACHING VETERANS ONLINE FOR RESEARCH AND OUTREACH EFFORTS

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THANK YOU

Thank you for participating in this clinical trial! Clinical trials are critical to making advancements in the scientific community and your involvement will help further important clinical research that can make an impact.

STUDY OVERVIEW

This **case-control study** was conducted in two phases, with the goal of developing and testing a very brief online program to reduce heavy alcohol use among young adult veterans in the United States.

In the **first phase**, we recruited a sample of over 1,000 veterans aged 19 to 34.

In the **second phase**, we developed methods to successfully recruit 784 heavy drinking veterans.

MEDICAL TERMS

1. Case control study: a study that compares two groups of people who have a disease or outcome of interest (cases) with patients who do not have the disease or outcome (controls)
2. Intervention: In medicine, a treatment, procedure, or other action taken to prevent or treat disease, or improve health in other ways.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

About half of recent American veterans and service members struggling with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), alcohol misuse, and depression do not seek care due to barriers such as limited availability of services or negative beliefs about how helpful treatment would be. Young adult veterans are particularly difficult to engage in care, making them an important focus of this study.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

How do we reach veterans in need of alcohol use care that are not currently receiving it?

Once we reach these veterans in need, can we deliver a brief, evidence-based, online program to reduce their alcohol use and related consequences?

PROCEDURES RECAP

WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS STUDY?



In the **first phase**, we examined how Facebook could be used to reach veterans in the community. Although veterans are an at-risk group for heavy drinking and mental health problems, few seek care. We demonstrated that targeted Facebook advertisements can be used to reach out to veterans and offer them an alcohol reduction program that they likely would not have received otherwise.

In the **second phase**, we developed and pilot tested a single-session personalized normative feedback (PNF) intervention for young adult veterans recruited on Facebook to increase the reach of an empirically-based brief alcohol intervention to this population.

POST TRIAL UPDATE

“ *The findings were very promising and documented that, at least in the short term, the very brief online intervention helped young veterans reduce their drinking and alcohol-related consequences.* **”**

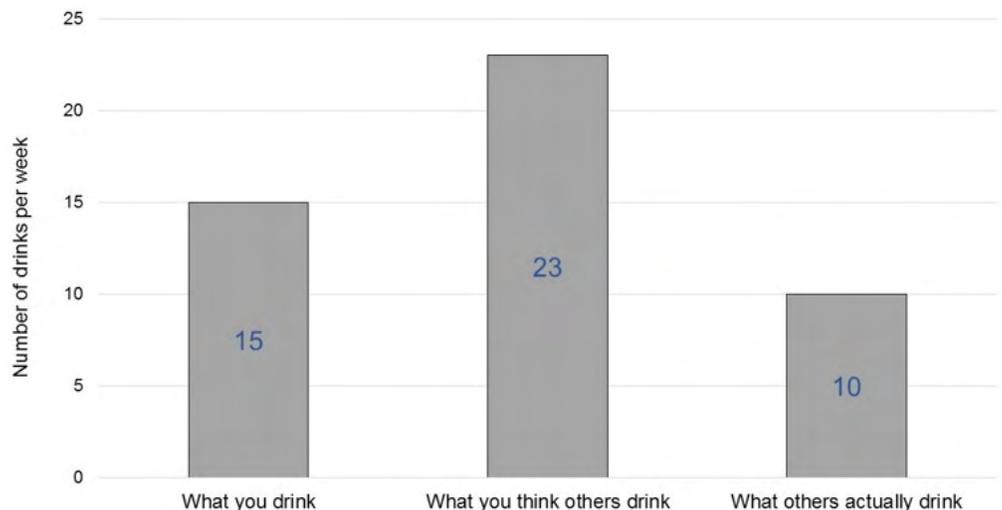
In the PNF intervention, veterans learned their peers drank far less than they thought. Correcting perceptions leads to less drinking.

Veterans also learned peers drink less than they themselves do, which serves as a reality check that their drinking may be a problem.

RESULTS BREAKDOWN

In the month after receiving the brief online PNF intervention, veterans drank approximately **eight fewer drinks per week**, binge drank approximately three fewer days, and decreased their experience of alcohol-related consequences by approximately **50 percent**. These reductions were all significantly different than the control group.

Young Adult Male Veteran Drinking



FUTURE STEPS

We hope to continue these research efforts by testing the long-term effects of the intervention and examining how this approach can be used to help veterans with heavy drinking and mental health problems, perhaps by increasing their engagement in both in-person and online treatment approaches.

To read more in depth about the findings of our research, [click here](#) to view our published research work.

