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ALCOHOL EXPECTANCIES, BINGE DRINKING AND ALCOHOL-RELATED INJURIES IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Background One the most studied psychosocial factors in alcohol drinking are the expectancies of alcohol effects (AE). They refer to the belief that a person holds on the cognitive, behavioural and physical effects of alcohol; they play an important role in the decision to drink. Binge drinking (BD) is characterised by the intake of high amounts of alcohol on a single occasion, and associated with injuries due to traffic and violence. BD is highly prevalent among university students; however in our country the relationship between AE, BD and injuries has not yet been studied.

Objective To study the relationship between AE, binge drinking and injuries in university students.

Method A locally adapted version of the AEQ was used. The questionnaire assessed positive and negative expectancies. It also included questions on BD and alcohol-related injuries. A convenience sample (N=777) of university students was selected (UNMdP-Argentina). A logistic regression was performed with BD as the outcome variable and the dimensions of expectancies as predictors. Then, the OR for BD and alcohol-related injuries was estimated.

Results Positive expectancies increased the probability of BD (OR 1.65 IC 1.5–1.9 $p<0.001$), while no association between BD and the

rest of the dimensions for expectancies was found. BD increases by three the risk of an alcohol related-injury (OR 3.22 CI 2.12 to 4.88, $\times 2$ 35.47 $p < 0.001$).

Conclusion Students that hold positive expectancies have a higher probability of BD and of alcohol related-injuries. Understanding which beliefs may predict BD in university students provides information for the design of prevention measures.