

Gender Differences in Cannabis Use Disorders: Preliminary Results from a Nationally Representative Survey of U.S. Adults

Marijuana Legalized: Research, Practice & Policy Considerations
April 2, 2018

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Context

- Increasingly permissive marijuana attitudes and laws mean over time more people will use marijuana, and more will develop a problem with it
- Known gender differences
 - Fewer women than men use marijuana
 - Women first use marijuana at older age than men
 - Women develop a disorder at an earlier age than men, and after fewer years of use (telescoping)
- Yet, gender specific profiles are rarely examined; often based on clinical samples

Data provided by NESARC-III

National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions, Third Wave

- Representative adult U.S. sample
 - National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
 - Oversampled Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, young adults, certain settings
 - In-person computer assisted interviews
 - Respondents received \$90
 - Response rates: 72% household; 84% person-level; 60% overall
- Cross-sectional design
- Data
 - Collected in 2012-2013
 - Released in 2017
- Use and DSM 5 measures of behavioral health
 - AUDADSIS-5

Total sample N=36,309 20,447 women 15,862 men
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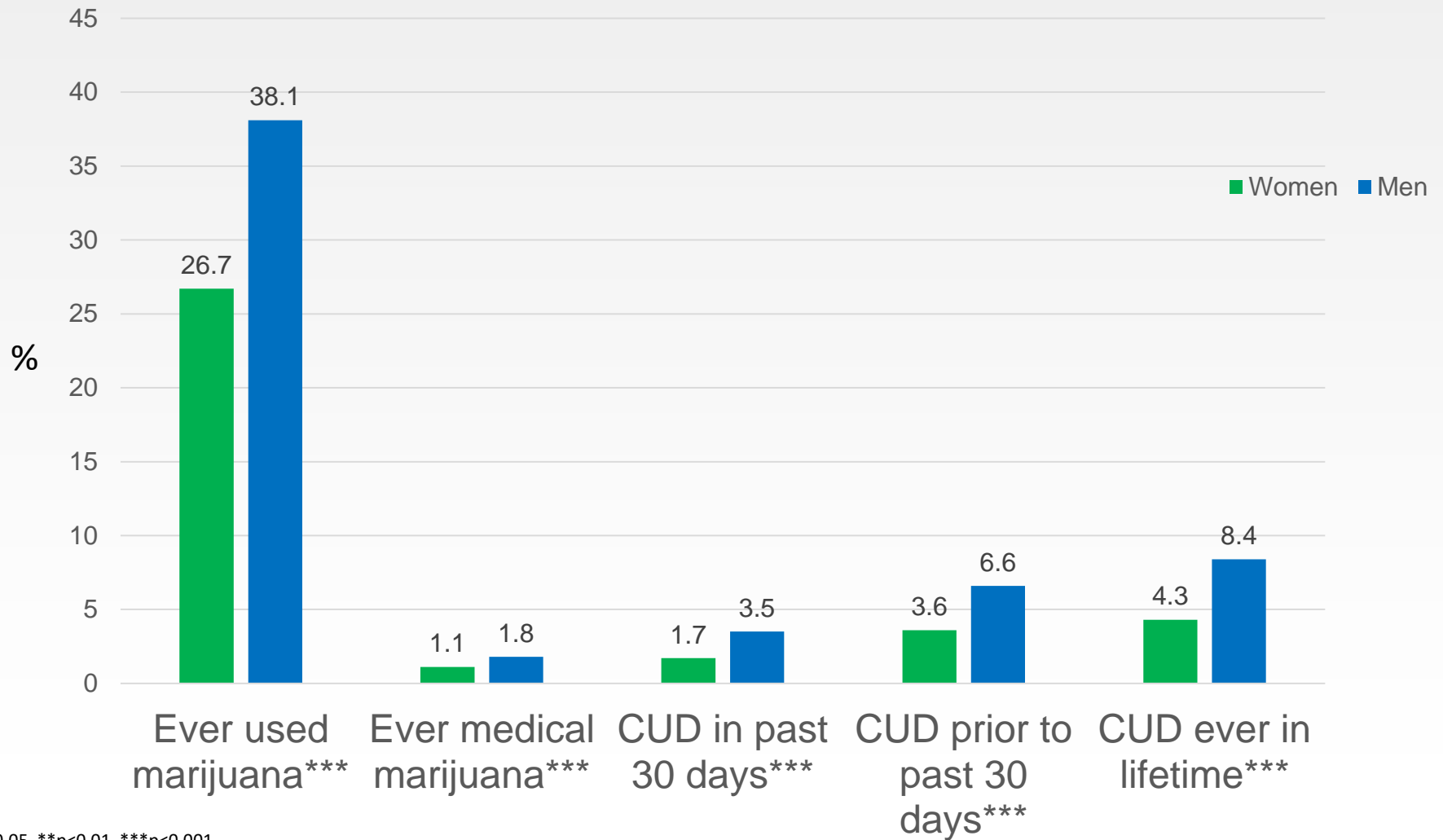
Ever used marijuana N=11,272 5,251 women 6,021 men

Ever had cannabis use disorder (CUD) N=2,242 878 women 1,364 men

Cannabis use disorder (CUD) is more than marijuana use

- A disorder is defined by DSM 5 as ≥ 2 of 11 symptoms for ≥ 1 year
- Clinically significant impairment or distress
 - Physical and psychological effects
 - craving, withdrawal, tolerance
 - Continued use despite problems
 - neglect of social roles, interpersonal problems, giving up important activities, spending a lot of time getting/using marijuana, physical/psychological problems
 - Impaired control
 - repeated quit attempts, use despite endangerment, using larger amounts or for longer duration than intended

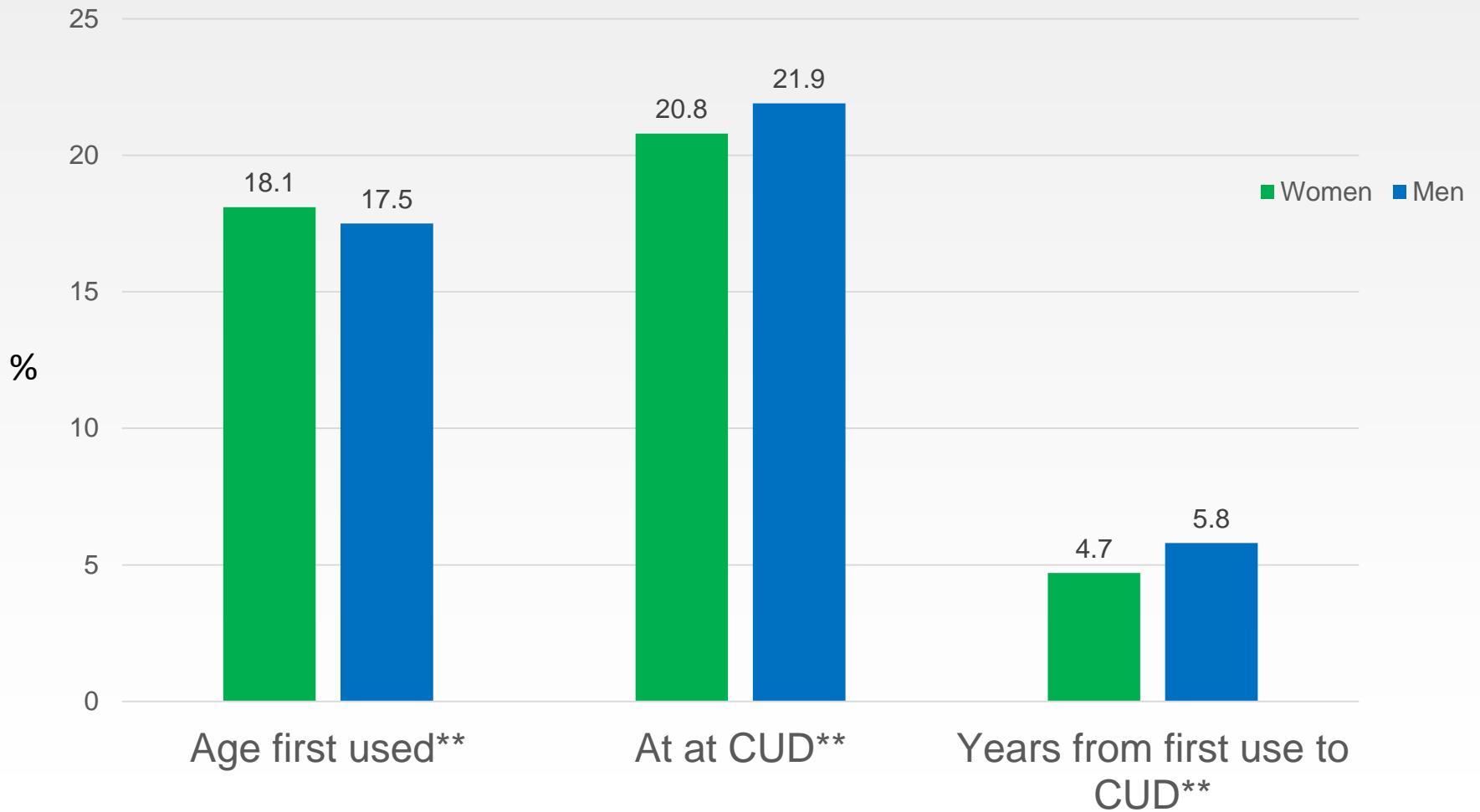
Marijuana Use and Cannabis Use Disorders (CUD) among U.S. Adults, NESARC-III weighted data



*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Of those who ever use marijuana, 17.0% of women and 22.6% of men develop CUD in lifetime.

Marijuana and Telescoping among U.S. Adults, NESARC-III weighted data

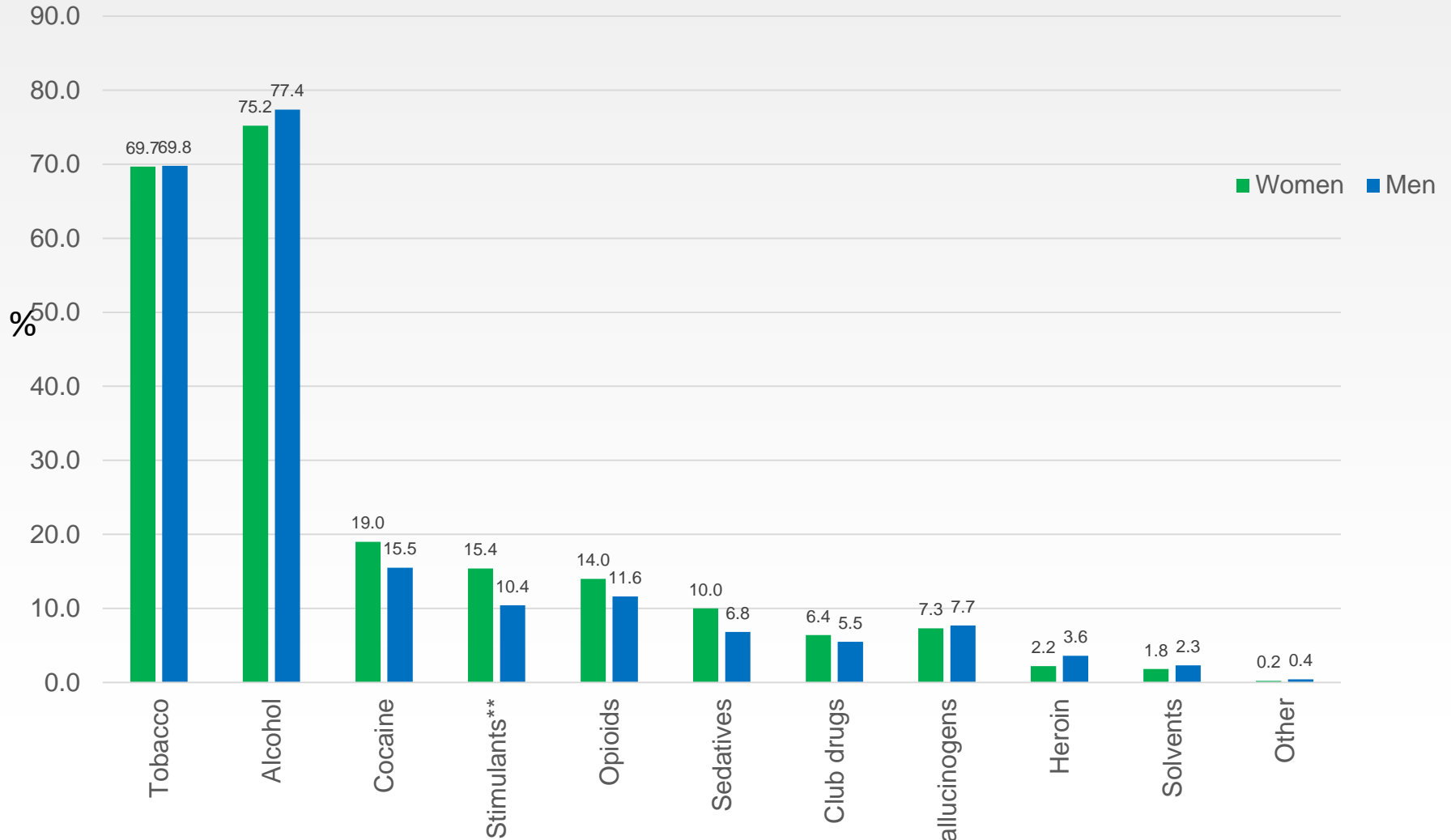


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Socio-demographics of U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data

	Women (n=878)	Men (n=1,364)
Age		
18-24	26.6	23.3
25-44	45.2	43.5
45-64	26.4	30.1
65+	1.9	3.0
Race/ethnicity		
White	69.8	70.4
Black	13.6	13.6
Hispanic	10.3	10.6
Other	4.8	6.2
College degree	56.5	45.3
Married	46.2	46.2
Lesbian, gay, bisexual***	13.1	4.7
Employed full-time***	38.4	50.7
Military veteran***	1.7	12.7

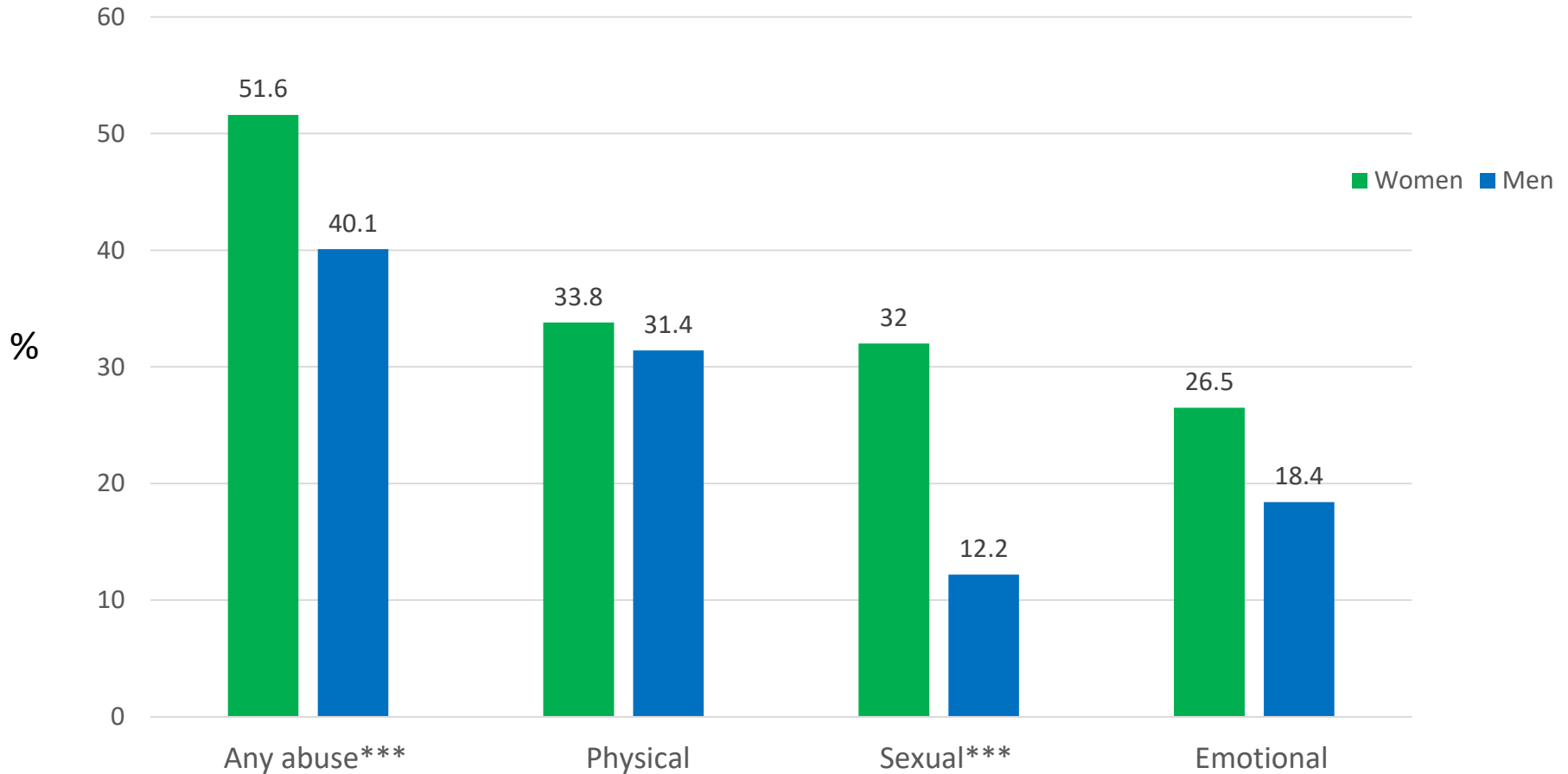
Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Substance Use Disorders in Lifetime among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



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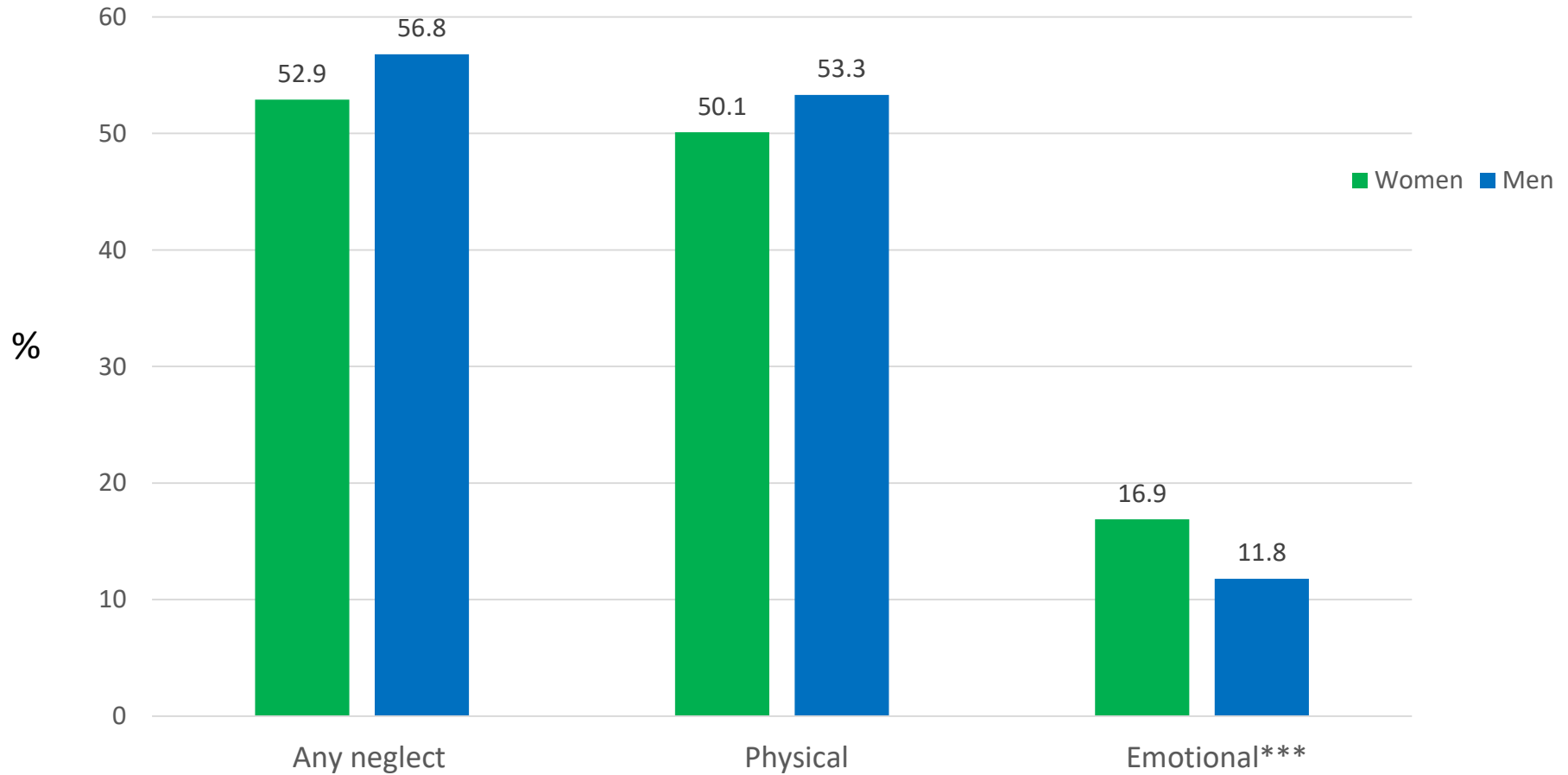


Childhood Abuse among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



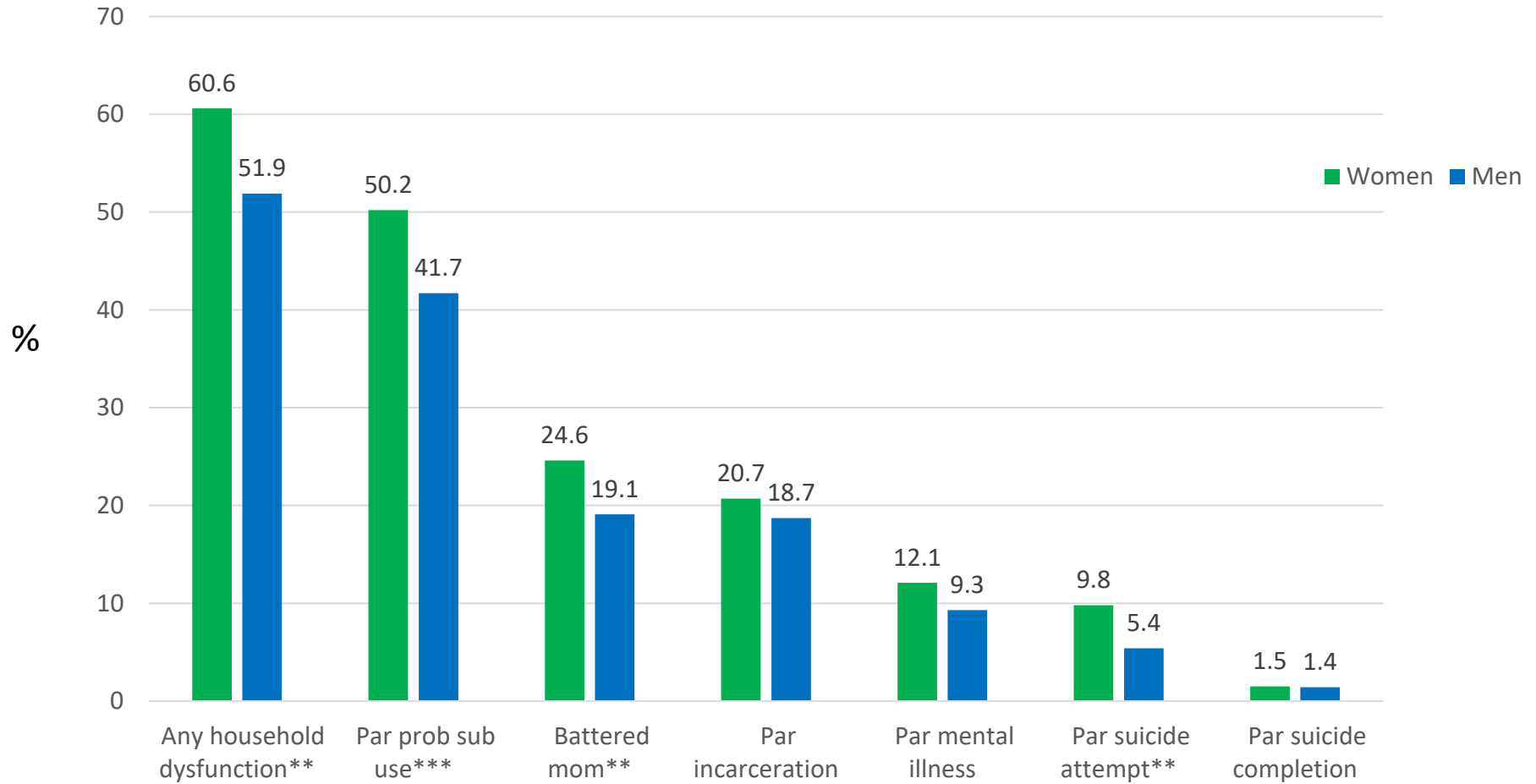
*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Childhood Neglect among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



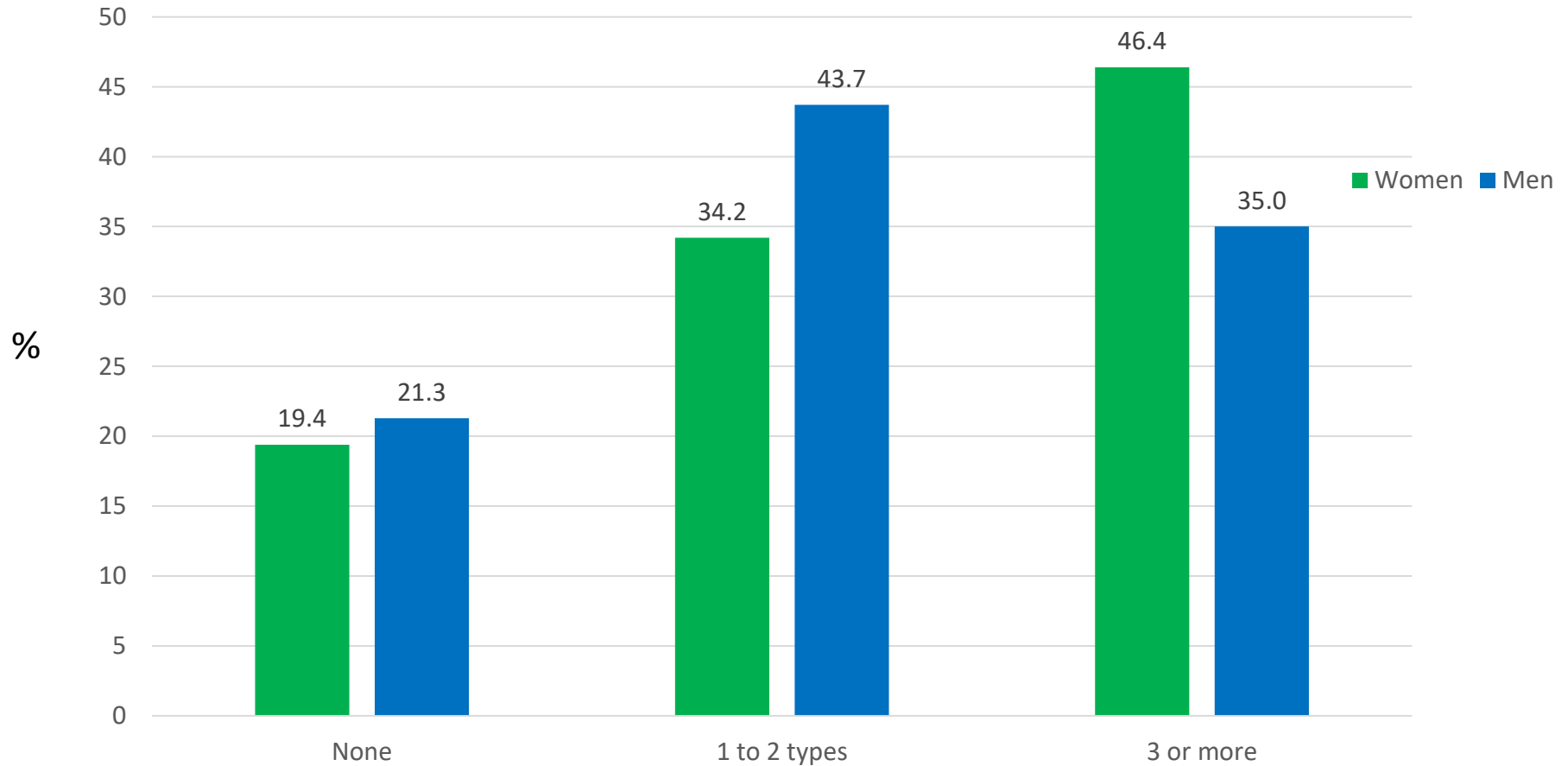
*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Childhood Household Dysfunction among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



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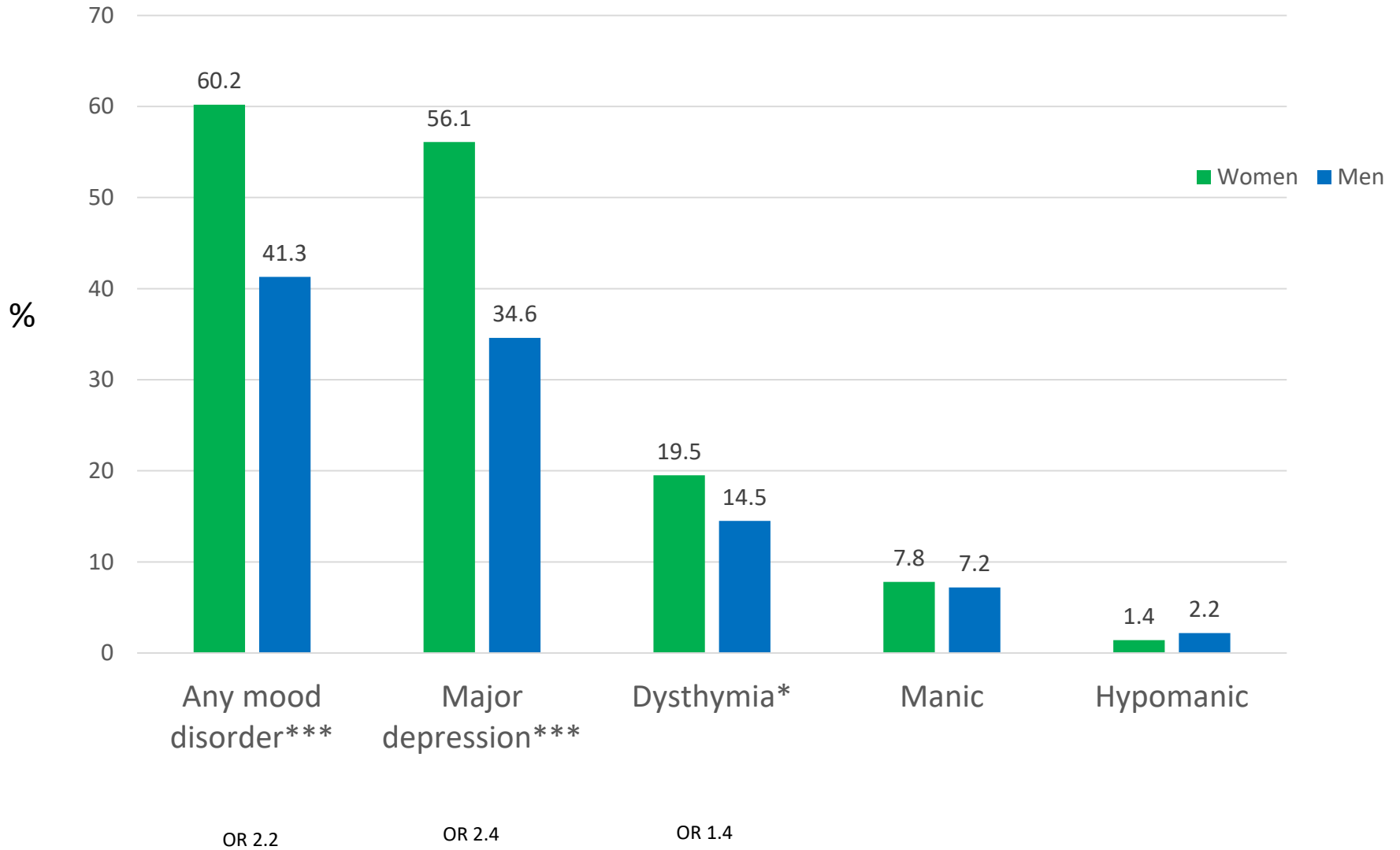
Childhood Adversity Exposure*** among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



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Mood Disorders

among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)

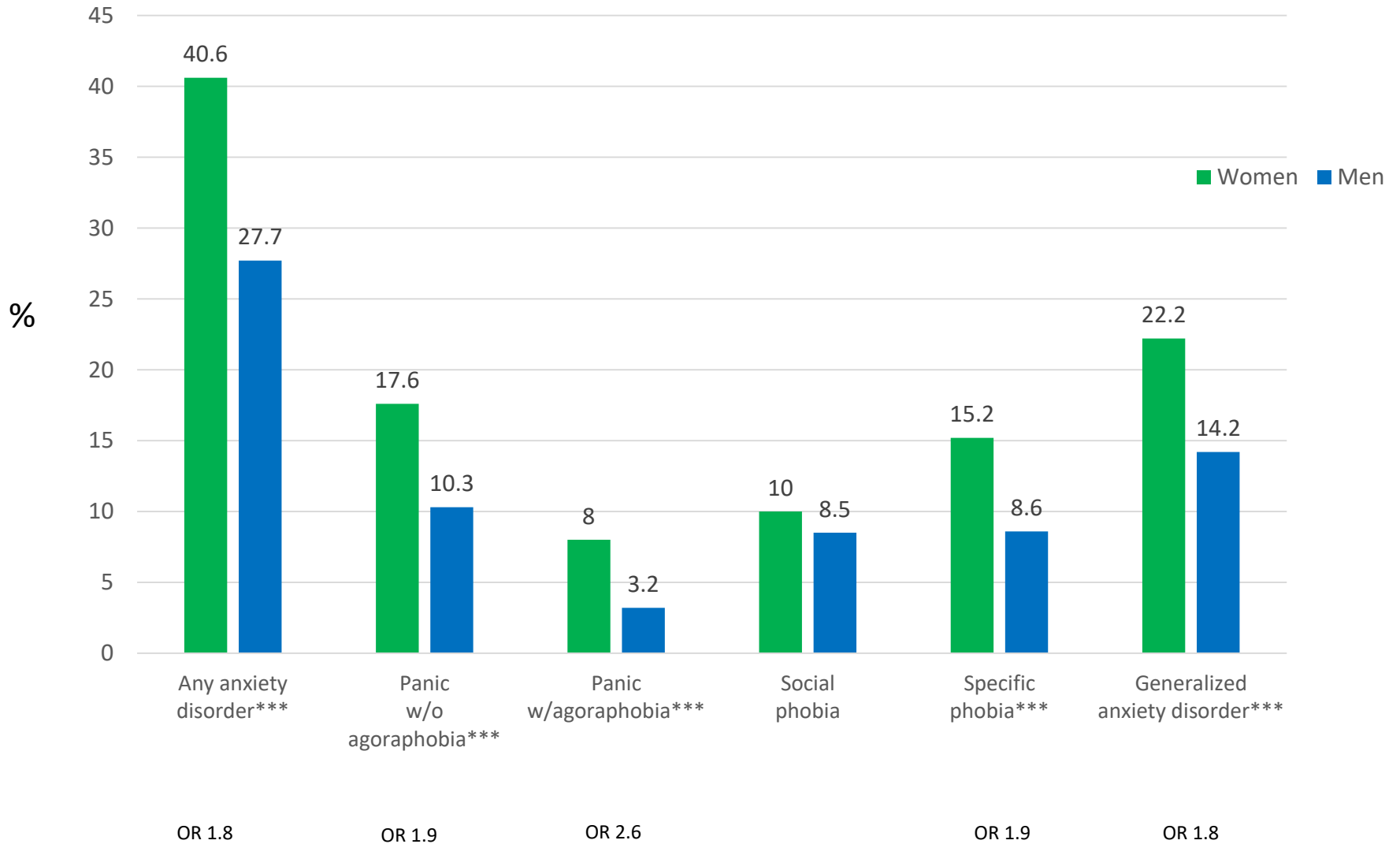


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Dysthymia: Persistent depression

Anxiety Disorders

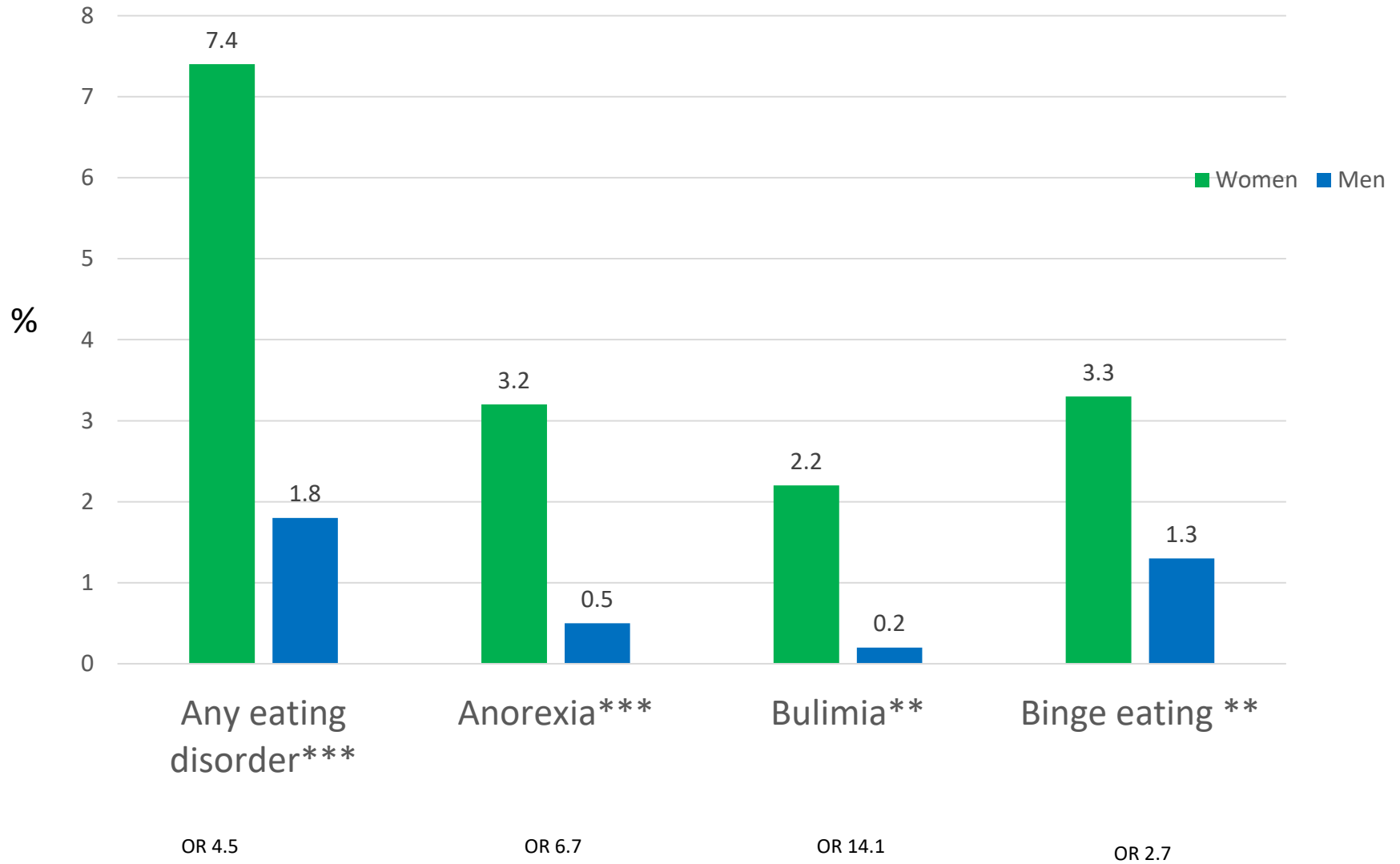
among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



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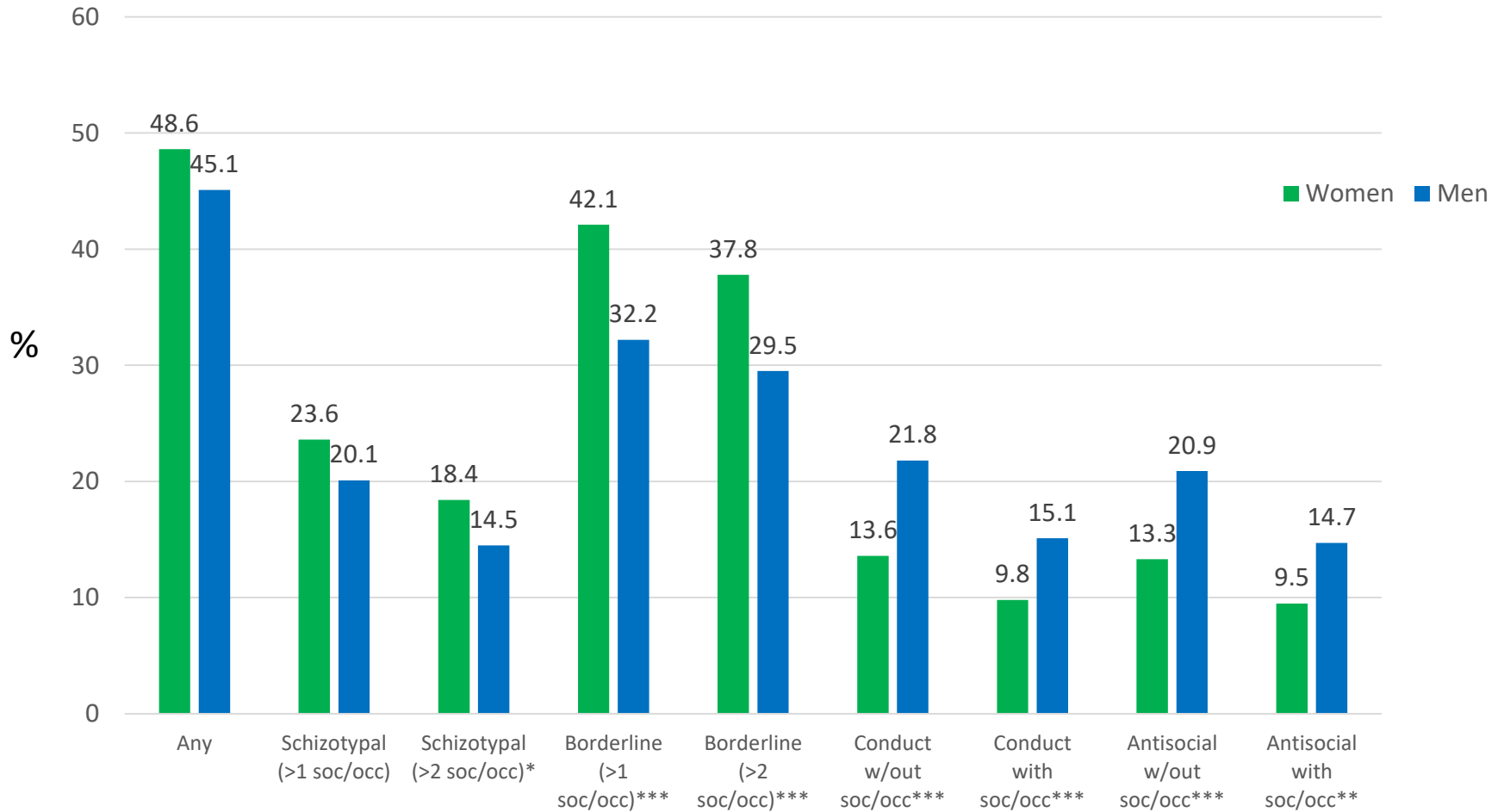
Eating Disorders

among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



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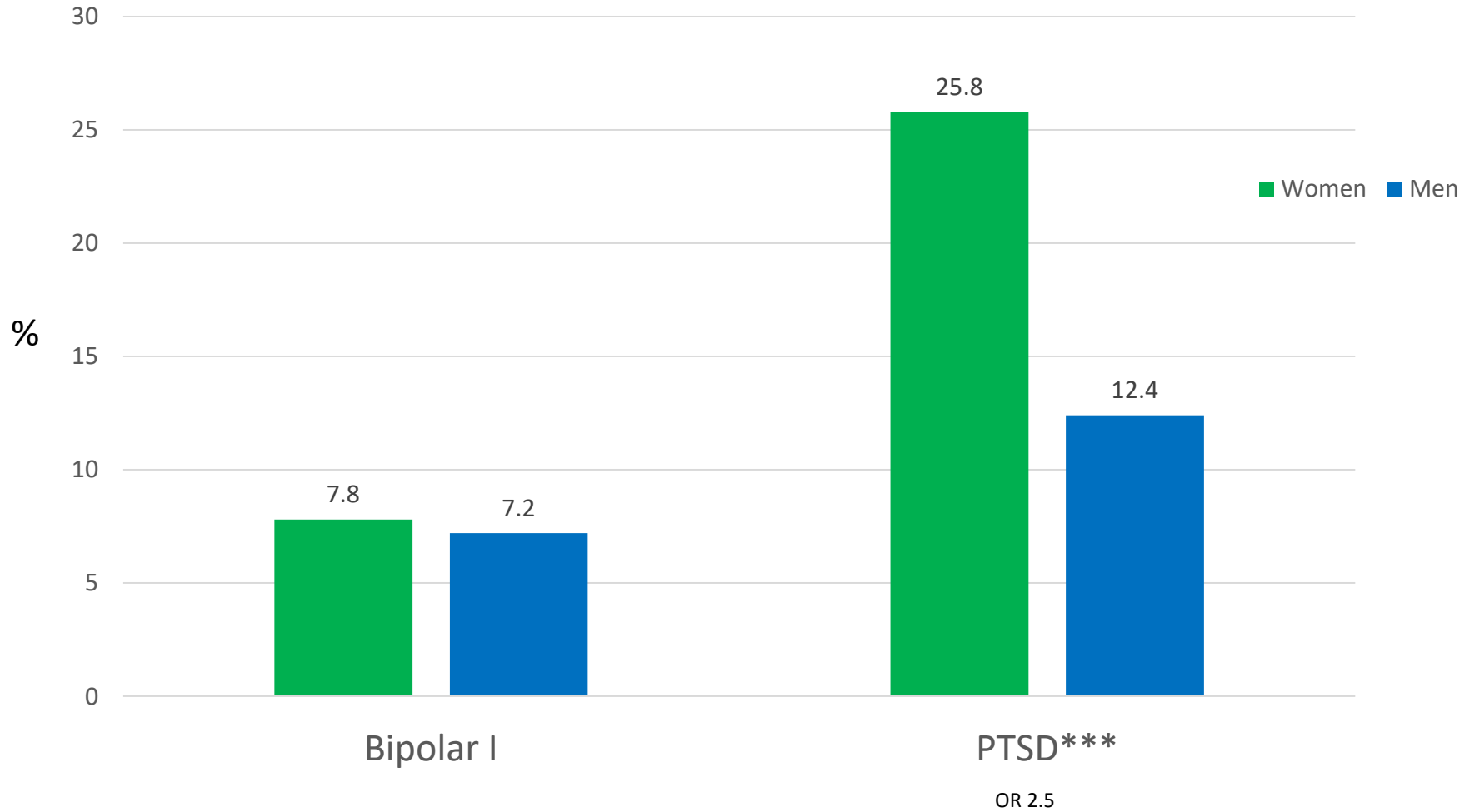
Personality Disorders among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



Diagnoses are provided with and without the requirement for the distress/social-occupational dysfunction criterion (soc/occ)

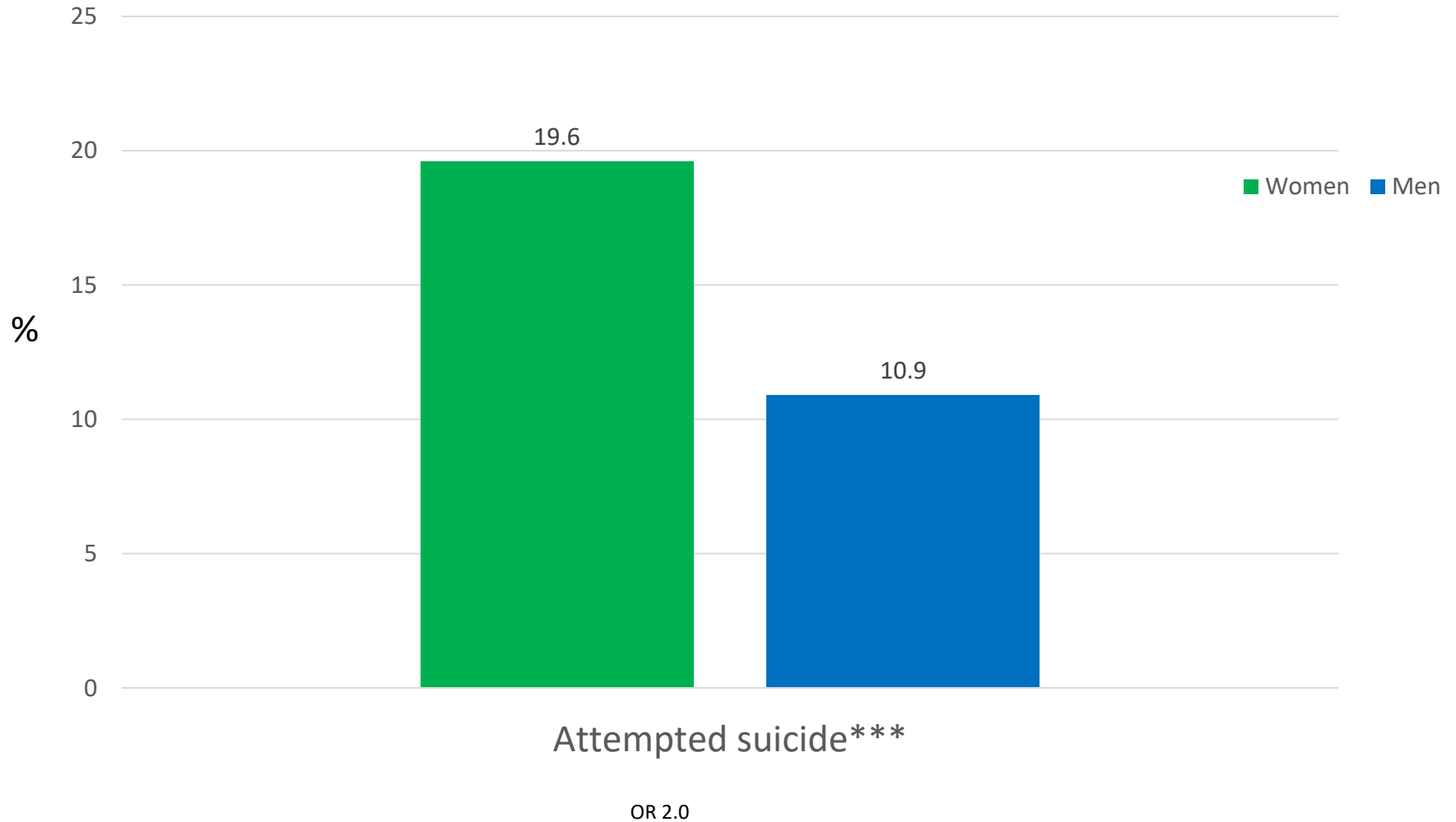
*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Other Mental Health Disorders among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



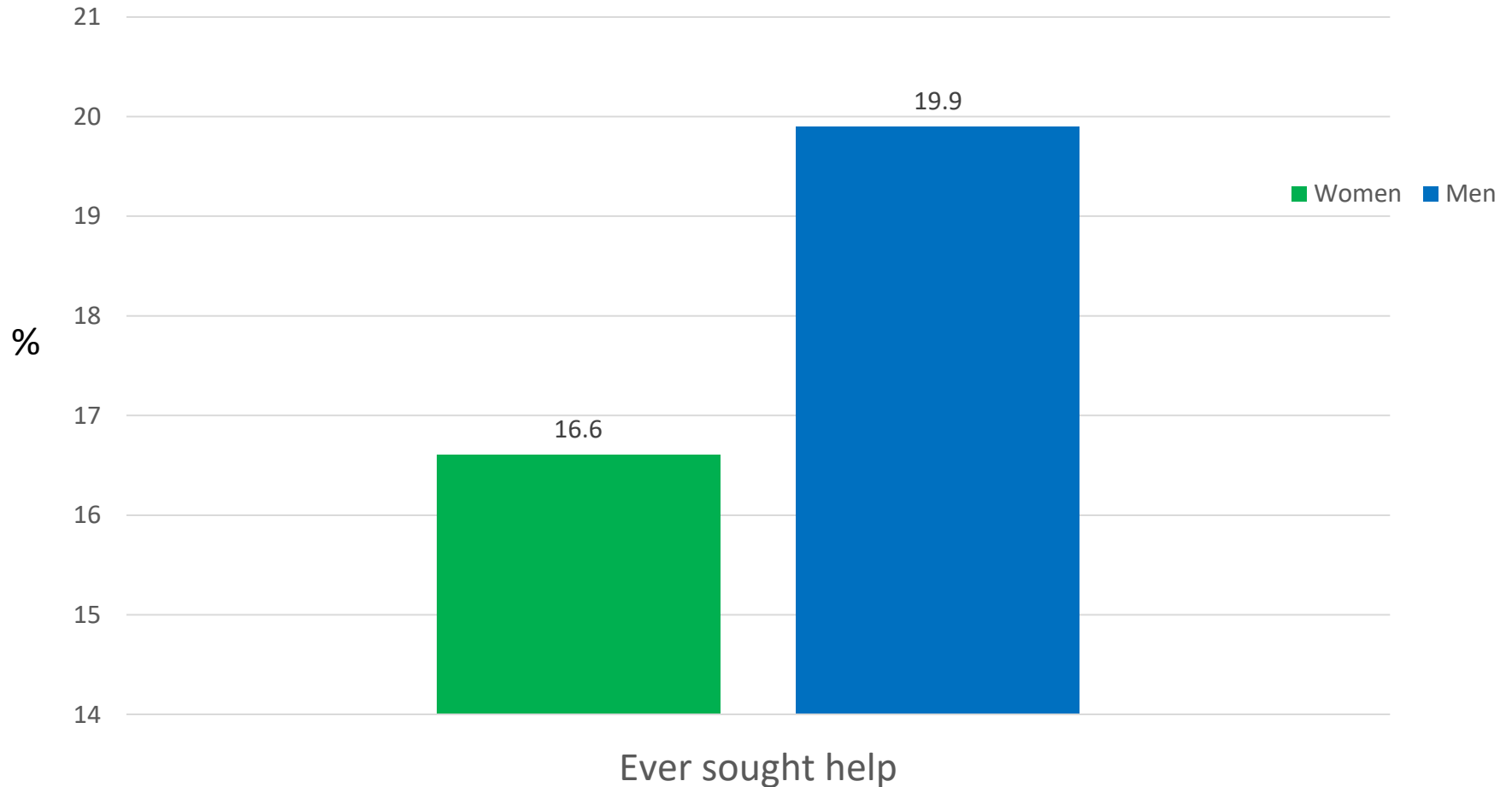
*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Ever Attempted Suicide among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Help-Seeking for Drug Use among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,242)



Factors Associated with Ever Seeking Help for Drug Use among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=2,233)

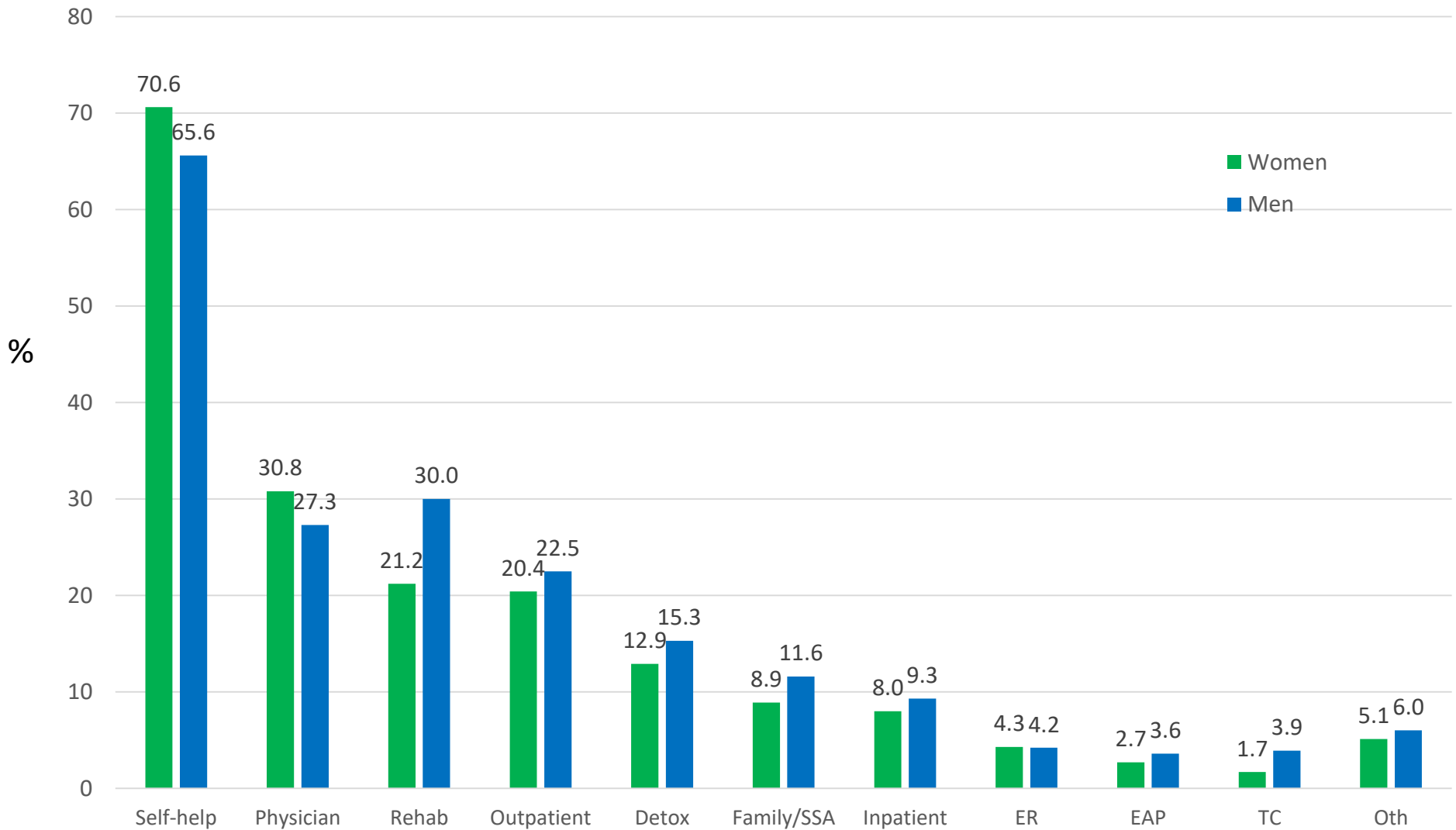
	Odds ratio (95% CI)
PREDISPOSING	
Female (ref: Male)**	0.7 (0.5, 0.9)
25 to 44 (ref: 18 to 24) ***	2.0 (1.3, 3.1)
45 to 64***	2.6 (1.7, 3.9)
65 and older	1.3 (0.5, 3.8)
ENABLING	
\$15k-29k (ref: <\$15k)**	0.6 (0.4, 0.9)
\$30k-49k**	0.5 (0.3, 0.8)
\$50k—79k**	0.6 (0.4, 0.9)
\$80k+***	0.4 (0.3, 0.6)
NEED	
Personality disorder***	1.7 (1.3, 2.3)
Post-traumatic stress disorder*	1.5 (1.0, 2.1)
Bipolar disorder*	1.7 (1.0, 2.9)
Alcohol or other drug use disorder*	1.4 (1.0, 2.0)

Results from logistic regression.

Included in model but not shown because not significant: race/ethnicity, region, education, mood or anxiety disorder, eating disorder, childhood adversity exposure .

Where Seek Help

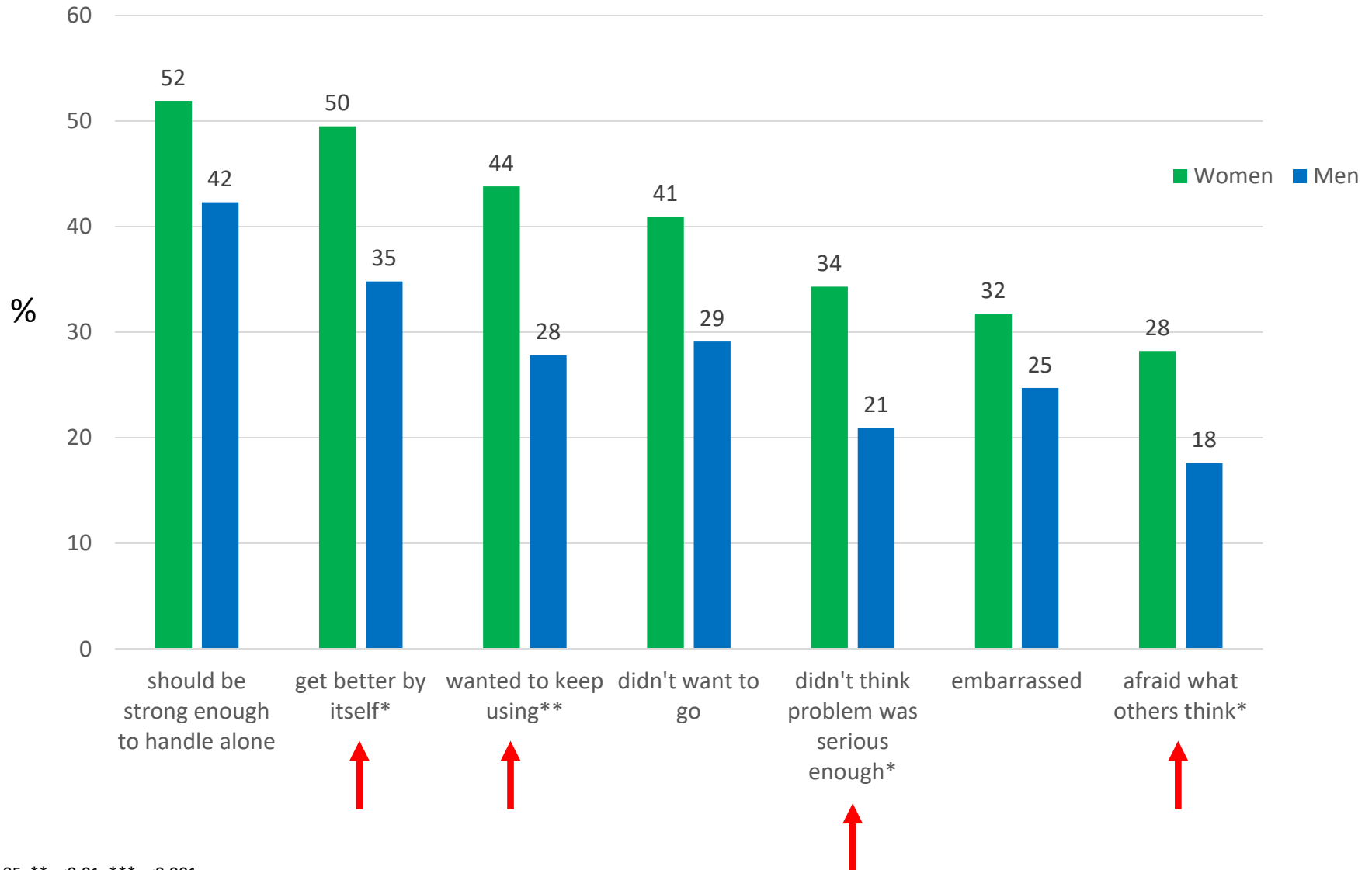
among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (N=427)



*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

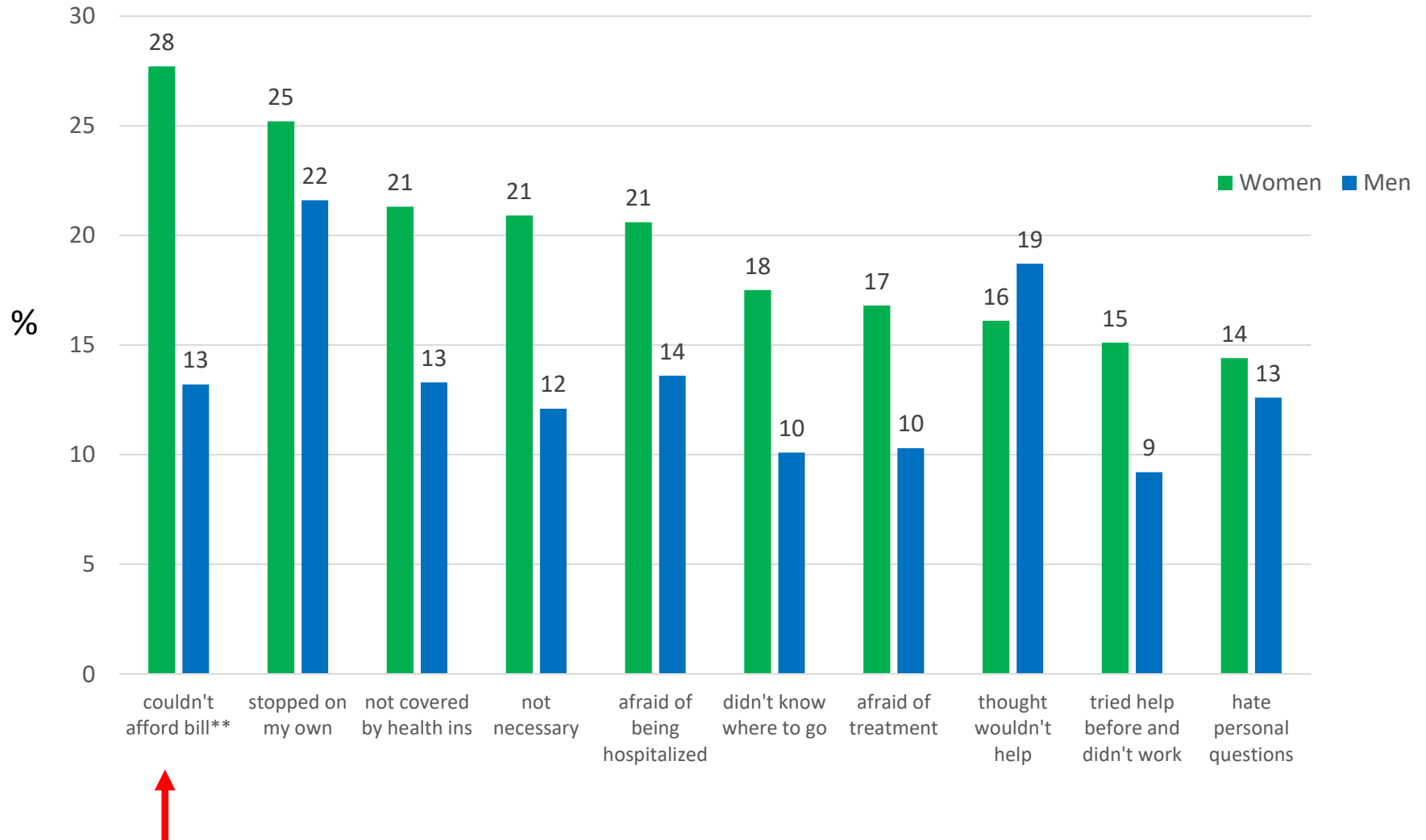
ER=emergency department; EAP=employee assistance program; TC=therapeutic community

Reasons for Not Seeking Help among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=1,814)



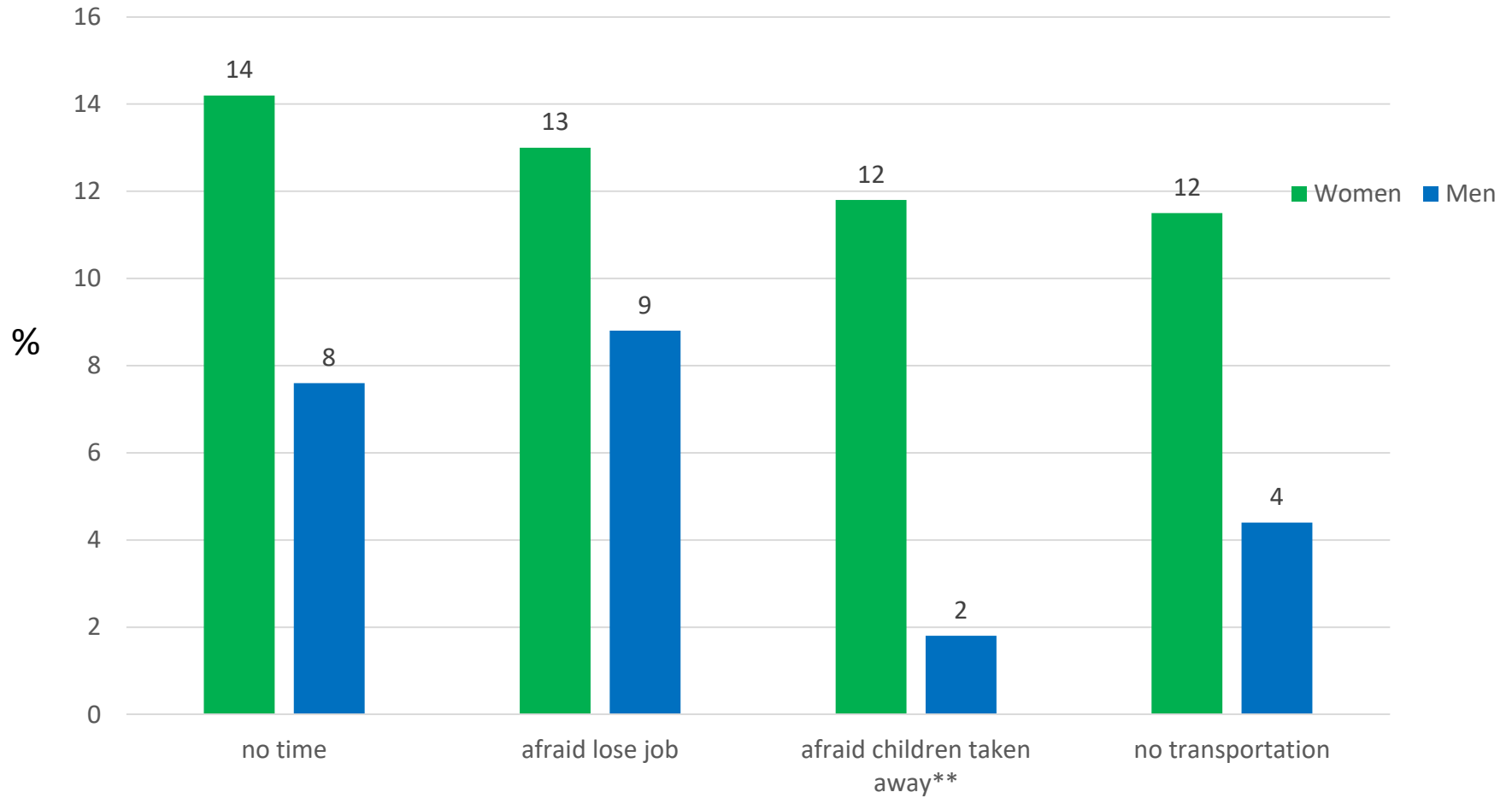
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Reasons for Not Seeking Help among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=1,814)



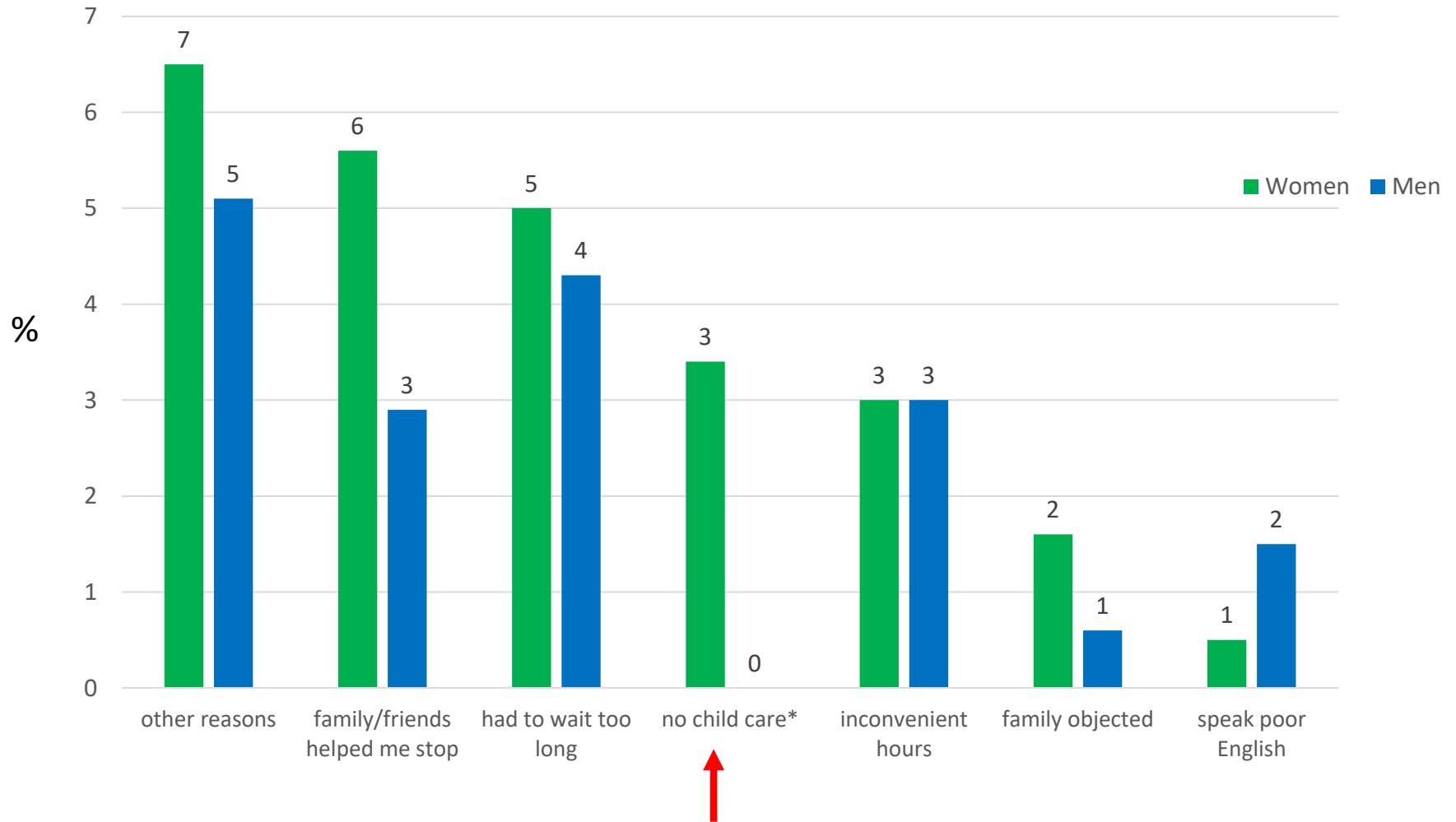
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Reasons for Not Seeking Help among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=1,814)



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Reasons for Not Seeking Help among U.S. Adults with Lifetime Cannabis Use Disorders, NESARC-III weighted data (n=1,814)



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Summary

- Women may have higher CUD liability than men.
- CUD is not a benign and harmless condition.
 - childhood adversity
 - co-morbid mental health conditions
 - poly-substance use
 - suicide risks
- Integrated care is needed.
- CUD is often untreated. Engage more in care by targeting reasons for not seeking help.
 - Women & Men: prefer self-reliance, embarrassed
 - Women: endorse “natural recovery;” believe CUD is not serious problem; fears re treatment costs, what others think, child custody issues
- Limitations: cross-sectional, self-reported, omitted prisoners and homeless.

Thank You!

Total sample

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20,447 women

15,862 men

Ever used marijuana

N=11,272

5,251 women

6,021 men

Ever had cannabis use disorder (CUD)

N=2,242

878 women

1,364 men

Ever sought help

N=427

152 women

275 men