



ALCOHOL

How Can Alcohol Affect Me?

- Alcohol goes directly into the bloodstream, which is why it affects every system in the body.
- Heavy drinking can cause cirrhosis and cancer of the liver.
- Children in families with alcoholic members are at a higher risk for alcoholism.
- Alcohol abuse can lead to both homicides and suicides.
- Drinking can cause serious injuries and death – more than 38% of drownings are alcohol related.
- Long-term effects of heavy alcohol use include loss of appetite, vitamin deficiencies, stomach ailments, sexual impotence, liver damage, heart and central nervous system damage and memory loss.

How Do I Know if I Have a Drinking Problem?

- inability to control your drinking – it seems that regardless of what you decide beforehand, you frequently wind up drinking too much
- using alcohol to escape your problems
- changing from your usual personality to a different one when drinking
- a change in personality – does drinking turn you from Dr. Jekyll to Mr. Hyde?
- a high tolerance level – you can drink just about everybody under the table
- blackouts – sometimes you don't remember what happened when you were drinking
- problems at school as a result of drinking
- concern shown by your family and friends about your drinking

REVIEW ONLY

School
Datebooks

About Alcohol – Quick Facts

- {1} *Know the law.* Alcohol is illegal to buy or possess if you are under age 21.
- {2} *Get the facts right.* One 12-ounce beer has as much alcohol as a 1.5-ounce shot of whiskey or a 5-ounce glass of wine.
- {3} *Stay informed.* Wine coolers look like juice sparklers, but they have just as much alcohol as a 12-ounce beer. One glass of clear malt can contain over 12% alcohol by volume. In some states, that amount is enough for anyone under the age of 21 to be held liable for drunk driving and be subject to a fine.
- {4} *Be aware of the risks.* Drinking increases the risk of injury. Car crashes, falls, burns, drowning and suicide are all linked to alcohol and other drug use.
- {5} *Keep your edge.* Alcohol can ruin your looks, give you bad breath and cause weight gain.
- {6} *Play it safe.* Drinking can lead to intoxication and even death.
- {7} *Do the smart thing.* Drinking puts your health, education, family ties and social life at risk.
- {8} *Be a real friend.* If you know someone with a drinking problem, be a part of the solution. Urge your friend to get help.
- {9} *Remain alert.* Stay clear on claims that alcohol means glamour and adventure. Stay clear on what's real and what's illusion.

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant. It affects virtually every organ in the body, and chronic use can lead to numerous preventable diseases, including alcoholism. According to the 1994 Monitoring the Future survey, alcohol remains the number one substance used by 8th, 10th and 12th graders. More than 50 percent of 12th graders report drinking alcohol within the past month.