

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 the “life of the party”
- a change in personality – does drinking make you a different person? Do you have 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
- missing classes as a result of drinking
- concern shown by your family and friends about your drinking

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. The glow of clear hard liquor are a strong indicator for thealyzer test. In some states, the amount is enough for anyone under the age of 21 to lose his/her driver’s license and be subject to a fine.
- {4} *Be aware of the risks.* Drinking puts you at risk for injury. Car accidents, falls, burns, drowning and suicide are all linked to alcohol and other drugs.
- {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 a 2005 study, drinking by college students ages 18-24 contributes to an estimated 1,700 student deaths, 600,000 injuries, 90,000 sexual assaults and 474,000 acts of unprotected sex each year.

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