

WELL BALANCED^o

- APRIL 2023 -
Alcohol Awareness Month



Dare TO BE AWARE: Alcohol Awareness Month

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. While alcohol is legal for adults 21 years of age and older to consume in safe amounts, the excessive use of alcohol can cause significant health and safety risks. Addiction in America is an emergent and life-threatening problem. Today, excessive alcohol use is a leading preventable cause of death in the U.S. with alcohol-related ER visits on the rise.⁽¹⁾

If you choose to consume alcohol or live or work with others who do, it's important to be aware of how to drink responsibly, as well as the health impacts, safety risks, and signs of addiction when it is used excessively.

Safe Consumption of Alcohol

It is recommended that adults of legal drinking age choose not to drink or to drink in moderation.

- » A moderate amount for men is 2 drinks or less per day for men, and 1 drink or less per day for women.
- » Don't drink if you are pregnant or might be pregnant.
- » Don't drink if you are younger than 21 years old.
- » Don't drink if you have a certain medical condition or take medications that can interact with alcohol. You should talk to your doctor about this.
- » Never drink and drive.
- » Eat before and during drinking sessions.
- » Drink plenty of water between drinks and throughout the day.⁽¹⁾

What is Considered One Drink?

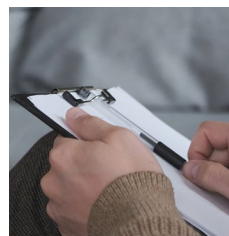
- » 12 ounces of beer
- » 8 ounces of malt liquor
- » 5 ounces of wine
- » 1.5 ounces of hard liquor or distilled spirits⁽¹⁾

The Health Impacts

Drinking excessive amounts of alcohol on one occasion or regularly over time can cause health problems like liver disease, digestive problems, heart problems, diabetes complications, disruption to sexual function, eye problems, bone damage, weakened immune system, and increased risk of cancer.⁽²⁾

The Safety Risks

Excessive drinking can reduce your judgment skills and inhibitions which can lead to risky behaviors, dangerous situations, and poor situations like motor vehicle accidents, accidental injury, relationship problems,



Want more guidance on safe alcohol consumption, AUD prevention, or support for excessive alcohol use?

Talk to your doctor, a mental health professional, or find a local support group like Alcoholics Anonymous.

poor performance at work or school, legal problems, problems with employment or finances, problems with other substance use, engaging in risky sexual behaviors, increased risk of attempted suicide.⁽²⁾

Spotting the Signs of Addiction

Alcohol addiction or Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) signs and symptoms may include⁽²⁾:

- » Difficulty limiting alcohol consumption
- » Spending a lot of time drinking or getting alcohol
- » Feeling strong urges to drink alcohol
- » Decreased work performance
- » Reduced interest in social interaction or hobbies
- » Developing a tolerance to alcohol or needing more to feel its effects
- » Experiencing withdrawal symptoms like nausea, sweating or shaking when not drinking
- » Frequent mood changes and defensive behavior

Steps for Prevention

To keep a healthy relationship with alcohol, you can⁽³⁾:

- » Choose not to drink and/or limit your alcohol use to the recommended intake.
- » Be mindful of your alcohol consumption.
- » Avoid drinking as a coping mechanism for emotional distress.
- » Get support from friends and family if you find yourself beginning to struggle with excessive alcohol consumption.
- » Be aware of social environments that encourage unsafe or excessive alcohol consumption.

Help Available

If you feel that you may have or be at risk for AUD or are struggling with excessive alcohol use, it's important to talk to someone and get support from people who can help you. Tell a trusted friend or family member, talk to your health care provider, seek out a mental health professional, or find a support group such as Alcoholics Anonymous.

There's no need to feel embarrassed or ashamed for reaching out for help. Your health and well-being is essential.



Want more resources on alcohol use?

Talk to your employer to find out what is available to you through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or employee wellness program.



⁽¹⁾ <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/moderate-drinking.htm#:~:text=To%20reduce%20the%20risk%20of%20days%20when%20alcohol%20is%20consumed> ⁽²⁾ https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/alcohol-use-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20369243?mc_id=global&utm_source=webpage&utm_medium=i&utm_content=epsmentalhealth&utm_campaign=mayoclinic&geo=global&placementsite=enterprise&invsr=other&caid=177193 ⁽³⁾ <https://www.addictiongroup.org/alcohol/addiction/prevention>