

Alcohol Information

Definition

- Information on alcohol use.
- Includes facts, myths, health risks, prevention, and trusted resources.

Health Information

Overview

- Alcohol is the most used recreational drug.
- Beer, wine, and hard liquor are examples of drinks with alcohol.

Types of Alcohol

- Alcoholic drinks have different amounts of alcohol.
- **Beer.** 4% to 7% alcohol.
- **Wine.** 10% to 15% alcohol.
- **Hard liquor (whiskey, vodka, gin).** 20% to 60% alcohol.

Symptoms

- The effects of alcohol start within 1 hour of drinking it.
- Alcohol affects people in different ways.
- People may feel happy, sad, anxious, or tired.
- People may have slurred speech, confusion, trouble walking, nausea, or a flushed face.
- Young children who accidentally drink alcohol can become very sleepy.
- In large amounts, alcohol can even cause death.

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- Alcohol is the most common recreational drug.
- Alcoholic drinks have different amounts of alcohol. All amounts have risks.
- It's important to understand the health risks of alcohol.
- Here's some information that can help.

2. Immediate Health Risks of Alcohol

- Slower thinking and reaction time.
- Poor judgment.
- Dizziness and clumsiness.
- Taking more risks.
- Risk of sexual assault.
- More accidents and injuries, such as car accidents, falls, and drowning.
- Binge drinking (4 to-5 drinks in 2 hours) causes more severe effects or even death.

3. **Long Term Health Risks of Alcohol**
 - Using alcohol when young can harm brain development. It makes it harder to learn and do well in school. It can trigger mental health issues.
 - Drinking alcohol increases the chance of using other drugs.
 - Frequent alcohol use causes liver disease.
 - Alcohol addiction (often called "alcoholism") can occur.
4. **Driving and Alcohol**
 - You shouldn't use alcohol and drive.
 - Reason: using alcohol impairs driver concentration and reaction time. Car accidents are much more common.
 - Don't ride in a car driven by someone who drank alcohol.
5. **Myths About Alcohol**
 - **"Alcohol isn't addictive."** Alcohol is addictive. The more you drink, or the earlier you start, the higher chance of alcoholism.
 - **"Getting drunk once in a while is ok."** Even getting drunk once in a while has many health risks.
 - **"Beer is safer than hard liquor."** Drinking a lot of beer is just as dangerous as a small amount of liquor. It will lead to the same health problems.
 - **"There are ways to sober up faster."** Coffee, vitamins, and other "sober up" products do not make you sober faster. It will still take your body the same time to process the alcohol.
 - **"I can drive after only one drink."** One drink is enough to hurt your judgment and reaction time. Even one drink makes driving dangerous.
 - **"Holding my liquor makes alcohol less likely to affect my health."** The more you drink alcohol, the more tolerance you develop. That means it takes more alcohol to get drunk. This leads to more serious health problems.
6. **Accidental Alcohol Ingestion in Children: Prevention**
 - Treat alcohol in the home like medicines.
 - Some household products also contain alcohol. These include hand sanitizer, flavoring extracts (vanilla, almond), and mouthwashes.
 - Keep alcohol locked up, out of sight, and out of reach of children.
 - Keep alcohol in the original containers. Don't put it in non-alcoholic drink containers.
 - Don't use alcohol when you're taking care of children. Reason: it will make it harder to pay attention and keep them safe.
7. **Alcohol and Teens: Prevention**
 - Talk to your teen about alcohol. Start discussions before age 14.
 - Set clear rules and expectations about alcohol use. Avoid lecturing or anger.
 - Share the risks of using alcohol. Remind them it can keep them from doing their best in school and sports. Share how dangerous it is to drive after drinking.
 - Support your teen in making good choices. Let them know it's fine to say no or walk away.
 - Talk about ways they can resist peer pressure. Brainstorm or role play with them. Help them find the right words to say no.
 - Help them stay away from people and places with alcohol. Tell them you will always give them a ride home.
 - Listen to your teen's questions about alcohol. If you can't answer them, use one of the resources below.
8. **Trusted Substance Use Resources**
 - **U.S. National Substance Abuse Hotline.** 1-800-662-4357.
 - **The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.** Provides a list of addiction treatment helplines. <https://www.ccsa.ca/treatment-support-and-recovery>.
 - **National Poison Center.** 1-800-222-1222.

Call Your Doctor If

- You are concerned about your teen's alcohol use
- You are concerned about your own alcohol use
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

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