



ALCOHOL POISONING AND ALCOHOL USE DISORDER

The holiday season is here and the Michigan Poison and Drug Information Center (MiPDC) hopes everyone enjoys the festivities. Many will indulge in alcoholic beverages this season. Those who overconsume alcohol can experience negative health effects and consequences. Injuries from falls and vehicle accidents are common results of alcohol use and abuse. Individuals may underestimate the time it takes for the effects of alcohol to set in. This can lead to greater alcohol consumption and prolonged adverse symptoms related to use. Taking steps to reduce the risks associated with alcohol use and unexpected exposure to alcohol can help keep your holidays enjoyable, safe, and healthy.

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND ITS EFFECTS

Alcohol depresses the central nervous system. The intensity of the effects is directly related to the amount of alcohol consumed. The amount of alcohol in an alcoholic beverage is not determined by the amount of liquid. The alcohol content is measured by percentages. For instance, a 12-ounce beer may contain 5% alcohol and a typical 5-ounce glass of wine usually contains 12% alcohol. A 1.5-ounce shot of 80-proof liquor contains 40% alcohol. Mixing alcohol with other beverages does not decrease the amount of alcohol consumed. It may only decrease the discomfort associated with consuming alcoholic beverages with higher alcohol content and the time taken to consume the beverage. This can be deceiving and lead to lapses in judgment resulting in greater overall alcohol consumption.

To learn more about the alcohol content of standard drinks, click [here](#) for information from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

Those who should not consume alcohol include:

- Any person under 21 years of age
- Anyone who may be pregnant
- Anyone who plans to operate a vehicle
- Anyone who is in recovery from alcoholism
- Anyone who has been told to abstain from alcohol for medical reasons, including the use of certain medications

People taking prescription or over-the-counter medication(s) for any reason should check with their healthcare provider before consuming alcoholic beverages.

Small children who consume alcoholic beverages are at a much greater risk for poisoning than adults. A two-year-old child who unintentionally consumes alcohol can experience significant central nervous system depression and low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). Children may also experience decreased breathing, seizures, coma, and even death following alcohol consumption.

Click [here](#) for the NIAAA Alcohol Treatment Navigator for help near you. Early intervention is key to preventing immediate and long-term effects of alcohol use and abuse.



ALCOHOL POISONING

Alcohol poisoning is the immediate result of excessive alcohol consumption over a short period. It is estimated that six people die each day from alcohol poisoning in the US. Excessive consumption of alcohol decreases brain function and can impact critical functions like breathing, heart rate, and body temperature control. Other signs of alcohol poisoning include vomiting, seizures, and the inability to wake. If anyone experiences these symptoms call 911 for emergency medical care.

ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE - LONG TERM RISKS

Alcohol use disorder can lead to chronic health problems. People who struggle with AUD can be at greater risk during the holiday season. People with AUD can develop the following serious health issues:

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease and stroke
- Liver disease and digestive problems
- Cancer
- Immune deficiency
- Cognitive impairment
- Dementia
- Mental health and social problems

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers may be available for use at holiday gatherings. Children and adults who drink hand sanitizer may develop symptoms requiring treatment in an emergency room. Keep hand sanitizers out of reach of children and others who do not understand the use of these products. Supervised use is always recommended. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) continues to inform the public about recalled hand sanitizers containing substances that may be highly toxic, ineffective, or contaminated.

Click [here](#) for updates from the FDA or visit FDA.gov and search “Hand Sanitizer Recalls.”

The MiPDC hopes everyone safely enjoys the holiday season with loved ones. If you drink, please be responsible and know your limits. If you have questions or need more information about the effects of alcohol, call us day or night.

Michigan Poison & Drug Information Center

1-800-222-1222

Free, confidential, non-judgmental, expert advice

Available 24/7/365

www.mipoisonhelp.org

