



ANG Psychological Health Program



Understanding Addiction and Alcohol Abuse

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What is Meant by “Addiction?”

- Medical Definition - a state in which the body relies on a substance for normal functioning and develops physical dependence, as in drug addiction.
- More Commonly - a recurring compulsion by an individual to engage in some specific activity, despite harmful consequences to the individual's health, mental state, or social life.



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Some Useful Definitions

- Tolerance - the need to use more to get the same effect.
- Withdrawal – symptoms that occur when a drug is stopped.



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Addiction Can Occur With ...

- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Cigarettes
- Gambling
- Sex
- Computer/Video Games
- Food
- Porn
- Crime
- Work
- Adrenaline



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What is Alcohol?

- Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant.
- Many people do not consider alcohol a drug, but it is — it changes the way the entire body functions.
- Alcohol is associated with a number of high-risk behaviors such as: suicide, spousal abuse, physical assault, sexual assault, motor vehicle accidents, and work-related injuries.



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Why Do Individuals Use Alcohol?

- To socialize
- They enjoy it
- Helps with relaxation
- Because everyone around them is drinking (friends and/or family)
- Peer pressure
- Gives confidence
- Helps with sleep
- Reduces anxiety
- Helps manage stress
- Because they are depressed
- It's what's done around here



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Alcohol Trivia

- How much alcohol is considered to be one drink?
 - One Shot of Liquor
 - 12oz of Beer
 - 5 oz of Wine
 - All of the Above
- The correct answer is “All of the Above.” Each of these types of drinks contains 12 grams of alcohol.



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“Healthy” Drinking

- How many drinks per day for men is considered healthy?
 - None
 - 1-2 drinks
 - 2-3 drinks
 - Up to 4 drinks
- For women, 1-2 drink maximum per day
- Per week
 - For men: no more than 10
 - For women: no more than 7
 - Drinks cannot be “saved up” and consumed in one sitting



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What is High-Risk Drinking?

- Having **5** or more drinks often makes someone **21** times more likely to:
 - Fall behind at work
 - Damage property
 - Be hurt or injured
 - Engage in unplanned or unprotected sexual activity
 - Drive while intoxicated



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Impaired Driving – BAC and the Human Body

- .02 No loss of coordination, slight euphoria, and loss of shyness.
- .05 This is the legal limit for military personnel.
- .06 Lowered inhibition, feeling of relaxation and euphoria, minor impairment of reasoning and memory.
- .08 Judgment, caution, self-control, and reason are impaired. **.08 is the legal limit in most states.**
- .15 Impaired balance, movement, and coordination. Difficulty standing, walking, and talking.
- .20 Decreased pain and sensation. Erratic emotions.
- .30 Diminished reflexes. Semi-consciousness.
- .40 Loss of consciousness, very limited reflexes, anesthetic effects.
- .50 **Death**



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How Can I Tell if I Have a Problem?

- Failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, and/or home
- Recurrent substance use in situations in which it is physically hazardous
- Legal problems
- Social or interpersonal problems
- Trouble trying to cut down
- Guilty feelings
- Annoyance that others are commenting on your behavior



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The A.U.D.I.T. (Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test)

1. How often do you have a drink?
2. How many drinks do you have when you are drinking?
3. How often do you have 6 or more drinks on one occasion?
4. How often have you found you were unable to stop drinking in the last year?
5. How often have you failed to do what is expected of you because of drinking?
6. How often have you needed a drink in the morning?
7. How often have you felt guilty or remorseful after drinking?
8. How often have you been unable to remember what happened the night before?
9. Have you or someone else been injured as a result of your drinking?
10. Has a friend, relative, or professional been concerned about your drinking and suggested you cut down?



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How Can I Help Someone I Love?

- Be compassionate but firm
- Set clear boundaries
- Don't tolerate abuse
- Don't help enable the addiction
- Provide support for loved one's treatment
- Get help for yourself — addictions affect everyone in the family



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Where to Seek Help

- Call the Director of Psychological Health
 - Mobile: 716-534-4209; -Office: 716-236-2401.
- Call the VA: -716-862-7344; Vet Center: -716-862-7350
- Call the Chaplain: Office: 716-236-2395
- Call- Airman & Family Readiness: Office:716-236-3411
- Call the Military One Source: -1-800-342-9647
- Call your local Community Mental Health Agency
- Support and education
 - AA, NA, GA, etc. (www.aa.org)
 - SAMHSA (www.samhsa.gov)
 - SMART (<http://www.smartrecovery.org/>)
 - Rational Recovery (www.rational.org)
- Talk to your Physician



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