

Adult Health Bulletin



APRIL 2013

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

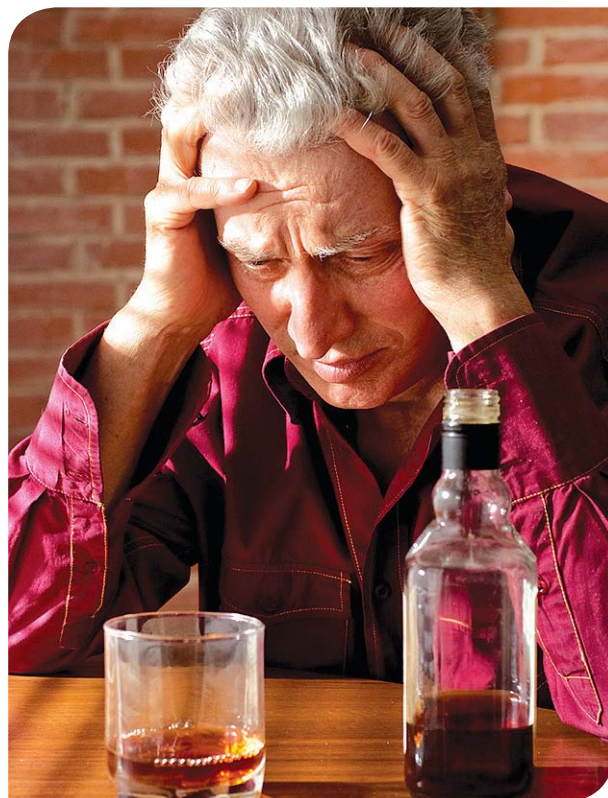
Alcohol is part of many customs and traditions. The use and sometimes abuse of alcohol affects many people. It is important to know the different effects alcohol has on different populations, especially older adults and women.

Alcohol and older adults

- Older adults usually need less alcohol to become drunk.
- Alcohol can stay in the system longer for older adults.
- An older adult may have vision and/or hearing problems, and slower reaction times, which can become worse when alcohol is used.
- If an older adult is taking medicine, mixing alcohol with the medication can be dangerous.

Alcohol and women

- Drinking alcohol can have a greater effect on women because they generally weigh less. Also, women typically have less water in their bodies than men which means the alcohol can be more concentrated and "powerful".



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If you or someone you know is addicted to alcohol, please seek help from a trained healthcare provider.

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- Drinking during pregnancy increases likelihood of miscarriage and fetal alcohol syndrome. Fetal alcohol syndrome may cause facial changes, slowed growth and learning and behavior problems in babies.

A person does not have to drink a lot to have a problem with alcohol. If you miss work, school, have trouble with relationships or get in legal trouble, it is important to seek help.

Alcohol abuse or dependence can happen quickly or gradually over years. For some people, an alcohol problem begins with drinking to keep up with other people. However, you may begin to drink more as a way to feel normal or cope with life's problems.

People who are dependent on alcohol may think they can quit at any time. Sometimes they are able to quit for days, weeks or even months before a relapse.

Alcohol use can cause many problems in the body:

- Harms your liver, nervous system, heart and brain
- High blood pressure
- Osteoporosis
- Some types of cancer
- Stroke
- Complications with medicines
- Violence
- Accidents
- Social isolation
- Problems at work, school or home

Drinking during pregnancy increases likelihood of miscarriage and fetal alcohol syndrome.

Alcohol awareness

Alcohol abuse and alcoholism can affect all aspects of a person's life and using alcohol over many years can lead to health issues. If you or someone you know is addicted to alcohol, please seek help from a trained healthcare provider about the issue.



Mixing alcohol with medication can be dangerous.

SOURCES AND OTHER RESOURCES:

- WebMD. Alcohol Abuse and Dependence — <http://www.webmd.com/mental-health/alcohol-abuse/alcohol-abuse-and-dependence-what-happens> Accessed January 2013.
- WebMD. Alcohol — <http://www.webmd.com/digestive-disorders/things-to-know-about-alcohol> Accessed January 2013.
- Alcoholics Anonymous: www.aa.org
- National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence: www.ncadd.org

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