

# Adult Health Bulletin



**APRIL 2016**

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: ALCOHOL AWARENESS

**D**id you know that alcohol is considered to be the most commonly used addictive substance in the United States? It is estimated that 17.6 million people have alcohol abuse or alcohol dependence issues, and millions more drink and behave in risky ways.

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. reports that many adults have a family history of alcoholism or problem drinking. Many children are impacted with approximately 7 million children living in homes where an adult is dependent on alcohol.

It is important to remember that defining an alcoholic cannot be done by what a person drinks or what time



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of the day they drink it. In fact, it really is not defined by how much a person drinks. Rather, if a person's drinking causes problems, help is needed. Those problems could be due to finances, physical issues and emotional problems. They could happen at work or in the home.

Drinking a lot of alcohol can cause many health problems. Health problems can be both short term and long term. **Some of those health problems could be:**

- Dementia
- Heart attacks
- High blood pressure
- Liver disease
- Depression
- Anxiety

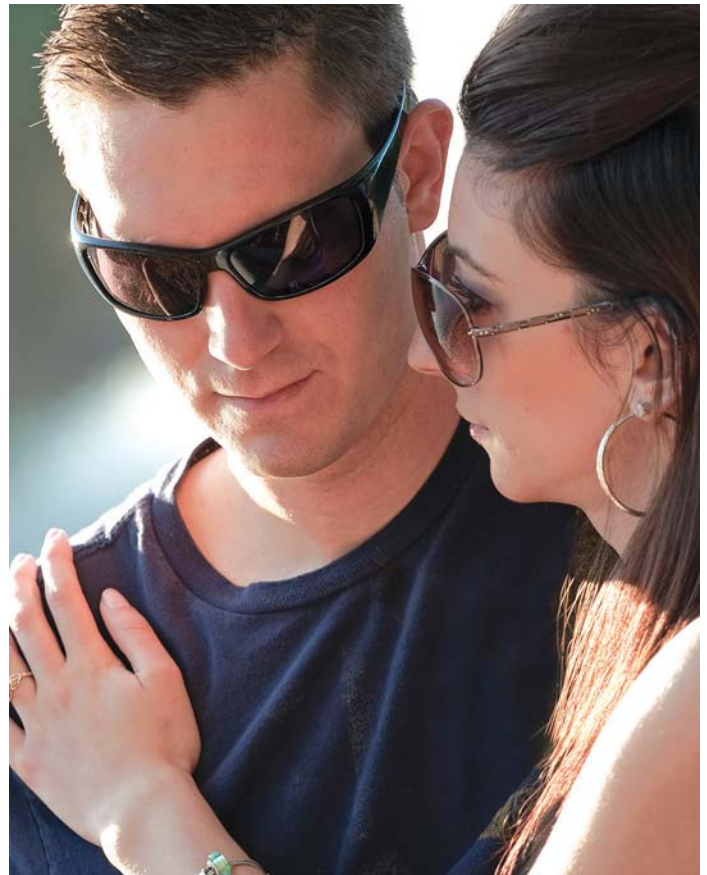
**Other issues related to problem drinking may include:**

- Loss of productivity (at work and home)
- Increased chance of injury (falls, car crashes)
- Increased risk of cancers (mouth, liver, throat)
- Increased risk of violence toward family and friends

There is no magic way to help a loved one who is dependent on alcohol. However, there are some things you can do:

- **Learn all you can about alcoholism and alcohol dependence.** This may include looking at trustworthy websites, getting books from the library or talking with others who have experienced alcoholism in their family.
- **Contact local help to see what services are available.** It is not useful to expect a person with an alcohol problem to just stop without help. It is likely they will need some new skills to handle their alcohol dependence.

*Talking to an alcohol dependent person and showing your concern is important. Show your support for them as they receive treatment.*



- **Speak up and offer support.** Talking to the person and showing your concern is important. Show your support for them as they receive treatment.
- **Know that it is a process.** There is no overnight cure. Continue your support for that person. Remember that success is a long-term recovery from their dependence.

Alcohol dependence and abuse is not an uncommon issue across the United States. An individual who causes problems due to his or her drinking is in need of help.

**SOURCE:**  
[www.ncadd.org](http://www.ncadd.org)

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