

[IMAGE]

Hard Facts about Alcohol

Excessive alcohol consumption has a serious impact on people's lives as well as on our nation as a whole. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "excessive alcohol use the 3rd leading lifestyle-related cause of death for the nation. Excessive alcohol use is responsible for 2.5 million years of potential life lost (YPLL) annually, or an average of about 30 years of potential life lost for each death. In 2006, there were more than 1.2 million emergency room visits and 2.7 million physician office visits due to excessive drinking. The economic costs of excessive alcohol consumption in 2006 were estimated at \$223.5 billion."

The impact on a person's health is considerable. Short term impact includes:

- Traffic injuries, falls, drownings, burns, and unintentional firearm injuries.
- Violence, including intimate partner violence and child maltreatment.
- Risky sexual behaviors that can result in unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases.
- Miscarriage and stillbirth among pregnant women.
- A combination of physical and mental birth defects among children that last throughout life.
- Alcohol poisoning that can cause loss of consciousness, low blood pressure and body temperature, coma, respiratory depression, or death.

Over time, excessive alcohol use can lead to chronic diseases, neurological impairments and more:

- Neurological problems, including dementia, stroke and neuropathy.
- Cardiovascular problems, including myocardial infarction, cardiomyopathy, atrial fibrillation and hypertension.
- Psychiatric problems, including depression, anxiety, and suicide.
- Social problems, including unemployment, lost productivity, and family problems.
- Cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, colon, and breast. The risk of cancer increases with increasing amounts of alcohol
- Liver diseases, including alcoholic hepatitis and cirrhosis (among the 15 leading causes of all deaths in the U.S.).

- Other gastrointestinal problems, including pancreatitis and gastritis.

Something to think about before you take your next drink...

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