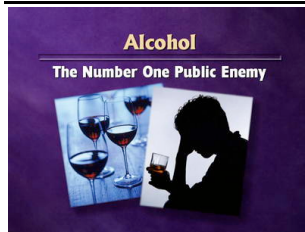


# Alcohol



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One of the most widely used addictive drugs in the world is **alcohol**.



©Eyewire #ARE 071

In the minds of many, social drinking is associated with relaxation and recreation. Advertising glamorizes drinking, equating it with fun and sex, while ignoring its harmful effects.



©BrandXpictures bxp26082

The reality is that alcohol is the most dangerous drug in the world. One in four deaths of European men under the age of 30 is related to alcohol, and in some parts of Eastern Europe, the figure is as high as one in three.<sup>1</sup> In the USA it is the third leading actual cause of death.<sup>2 3</sup>



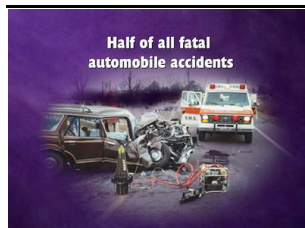
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Alcohol...

- Kills 5 times more people,
- Causes more disease,
- Wastes more money, and
- Destroys more families



...than **all other drugs combined!**



©Eddy Gifford, Dade County Sentinel

Alcohol is involved in half of all fatal automobile accidents ...



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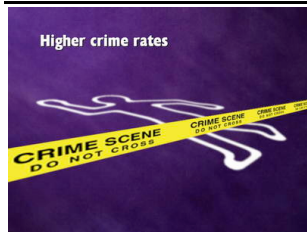
... as well as in many other household and work related accidents.



©Stockbyte #9684MDL

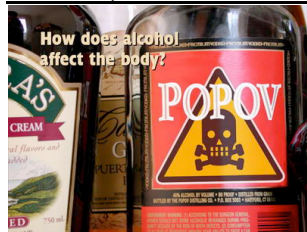
Even perfectly legal blood alcohol levels (as low as 0,02 percent) impair judgment and increase the accident rate!<sup>4</sup>

# Alcohol



©Wildwood Lifestyle Center

Alcohol is also involved in higher crime rates. In one study, two out of three people who were involved in murder were under the influence of alcohol.

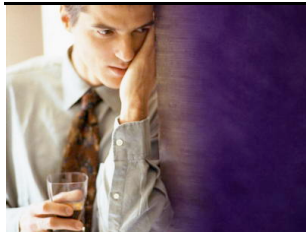


©ADM

## How does alcohol affect the body?

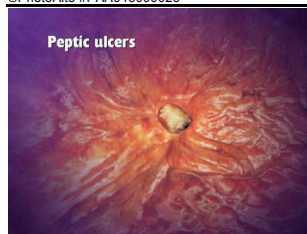


Alcohol is a poison. It doesn't have to be digested to be absorbed, but enters directly into your bloodstream, affecting every cell of the body.



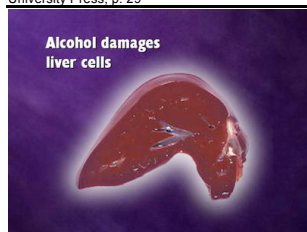
©PhotoAlto #PAA045000026

It only takes about twenty minutes from the time of taking a drink until the alcohol is in the bloodstream. During those twenty minutes, it is already starting to cause trouble, acting as a strong irritant.



©Curran & Jones, Gross Pathology: Oxford University Press, p. 29

Alcohol can cause so much irritation to the lining of the stomach that it will bleed. Alcohol is a common cause of peptic ulcers, as it stimulates the stomach to produce more acid and enzymes.



©Help MD #Z220-M-930

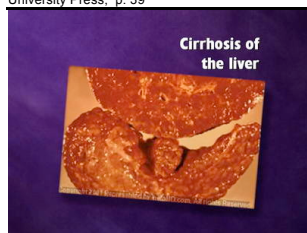
The liver tries to protect us by breaking down most harmful substances taken into the body. But in the process, alcohol **damages** the liver cells, even if one drinks modest amounts on a regular basis.

The more one drinks, the greater the damage.



©Curran & Jones, Gross Pathology: Oxford University Press, p. 39

When normal liver cells are destroyed, they are replaced with fat cells, making the liver yellowish in color, and more and more inefficient.



©Help MD # Z076-P-38

With long-term alcohol use, abnormal liver cells are formed, leading to cirrhosis of the liver. As these cells swell, scarring occurs and the liver becomes hard, irregular and gnarled. Some of the bile ducts become blocked, making the liver appear green.

Worldwide, cirrhosis of the liver is killing multitudes, and in America it is among the 10 leading causes of death.<sup>5</sup>

# Alcohol

Could you have a drinking problem?



©Corbis #GOV0077

## Could you have a drinking problem?

Most drinkers deny that they have a problem. A person **has** a drinking problem if alcohol interferes in any of these three areas of their life:



©Photo Alto #PAA094000014; Rubberball #FL49; Comstock #KS14382

- ➔ Their work,
- ➔ Their interpersonal relationships, or
- ➔ Their health.

Alcohol and the Brain



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The effects of alcohol upon the mind and body are far reaching. Probably everyone knows that alcohol impacts the nervous system. It depresses brain function. Yes, you heard it right, alcohol is a depressant.

You thought alcohol was a stimulant, didn't you? Wrong ... Alcohol lowers inhibitions, so that it **appears** as though one has been stimulated.

Increases incidence of

- anger
- domestic violence
- illicit sex

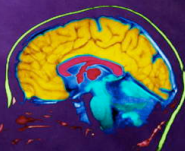


©Brand X #bxp28954s

Its use increases the incidence of:

- Anger,
- Domestic violence and
- Illicit sex.

Alcohol destroys the brain



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With **every drink**, some brain cells are permanently destroyed. Mental decline and measurable shrinkage of the brain are the results. Experts say that after only 2 drinks, several mental functions, including judgement and memory, are impaired.<sup>6</sup>



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On your next plane trip, would you want the pilot to have a drink or two before take off?

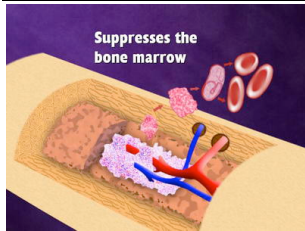
Right or wrong?



©Photodisc #62181

The ability to judge between right and wrong is also lost. What major moral implications that can bring upon our lives!

# Alcohol



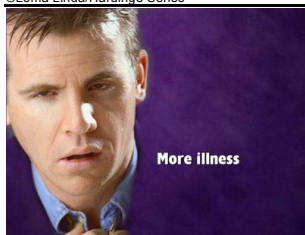
©Wildwood Lifestyle Center

Alcohol poisons more than the liver and the brain. It suppresses the bone marrow, the body's factory for producing blood cells. As a result, a person may become very anemic and have low platelets, resulting in easy bleeding.



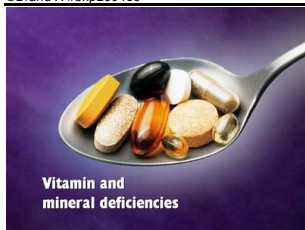
©Loma Linda/Hardinge Series

Alcohol also has a devastating impact on the body's defenses. Even small amounts of alcohol taken regularly depress the immune system, and measurably decrease the function of the white blood cells. Frightening findings indicate that alcohol also makes one more susceptible to the AIDS virus.<sup>7</sup>



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No wonder alcohol drinkers have more illnesses of almost every kind. They are also prone to suffer from chronic fatigue and miss work more often.



©Comstock #000010539

The more alcohol a person uses, the more likely they are to develop vitamin and mineral deficiencies. Alcohol can interfere with the body's absorption and use, of almost every vitamin and mineral.<sup>8</sup>



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And did you know that alcohol contains nearly twice as many calories per gram as pure sugar?<sup>9</sup> Drinking one beer each day would lead to 7 kilograms of weight gain in one year. In addition, those who consume alcohol, often eat more food.<sup>10</sup>

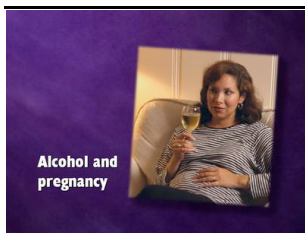


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With all of these effects, it is hardly surprising that alcohol significantly increases the risk of cancer. In one study on over 7,000 women,



...as little as 3 drinks a week increased the risk of breast cancer.<sup>11</sup>



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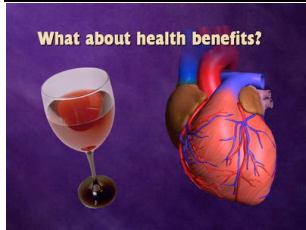
And what about the effects of alcohol on the unborn babies? Even small amounts of alcohol in a pregnant woman, especially if very early in the pregnancy, can damage the unborn baby in many ways. It may lead to abnormalities of major organs, as well as an abnormal looking baby.<sup>12</sup>

# Alcohol



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Most important, however, is the fact that alcohol during pregnancy is the leading environmental cause of mental retardation in the Western world.<sup>13</sup>



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Someone may ask, “But **what about the reported health benefits** of moderate drinking?”

Despite the fact that many people die every year because of alcohol, it has become very popular to praise the benefits of “moderate drinking”. The only evidence, however, is the claim of some researchers that red wine protects against heart attacks.

In one study, the protective substances of red wine were given experimentally to animals to find out.



©Hemera Technologies

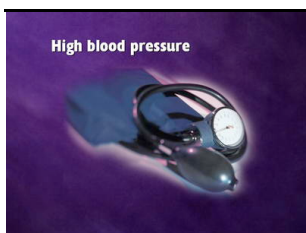
It required the equivalent of 12 drinks for an adult man to achieve the protective effects against heart disease!<sup>14</sup>

Yet, this amount of alcohol has a direct toxic effect on the heart **muscle** itself. Besides, who would ever recommend taking 12 drinks daily?



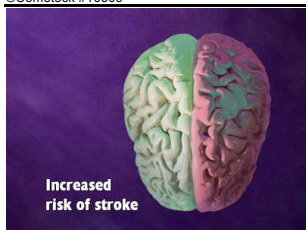
©Corel #275053, 275089

It’s true that red wine contains various protective plant chemicals, but these are also found abundantly in grape juice, as well as in the grapes themselves.<sup>15</sup> These phytochemicals prevent heart disease by improving cholesterol and inhibiting blood clots. In view of the far-reaching effects of alcohol, wouldn’t it be much wiser to drink grape juice or eat the grapes themselves?



©Comstock #10509

In addition, alcohol has been found to damage the circulation by raising the blood pressure. Up to 30% of high blood pressure in American men might be related to alcohol.<sup>16</sup> And the more alcohol used, the higher the blood pressure tends to be.<sup>17</sup>



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Alcohol also increases the risk of strokes, even with normal blood pressure. These strokes can occur even in young people, as well as in those who only drink small amounts<sup>18</sup>

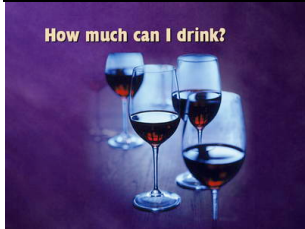
# Alcohol



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## Does the kind of alcohol make a difference?

The truth is, the body doesn't know the difference. Most people are surprised to learn that a can of beer or a glass of wine has just as much alcohol as a shot of whiskey.



©John Foxx #FO2388

How much can I drink?

You may ask, "How much alcohol can I safely drink?" We recommend that you drink **none** at all.

Even small amounts of alcohol have been shown to be damaging to our bodies. Besides, the only sure way to avoid becoming a heavy drinker is to be a non-drinker.



©Photodisc #12213

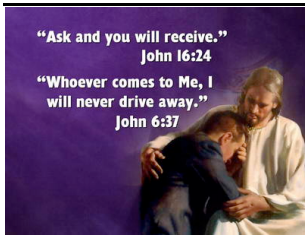
1 in 10

The World Health Organization has become a strong advocate of total abstinence from alcohol. They emphasize that anyone who drinks socially today has the potential of becoming a heavy drinker tomorrow.<sup>19</sup>



One out of ten people who take their first drink will become an alcoholic. You don't know whether that will be you or not.

If you drink alcohol, these facts may seem overwhelming to you.



©ADM

"Ask and you will receive."  
John 16:24  
"Whoever comes to Me, I  
will never drive away."  
John 6:37

Those who believe in a loving God, readily realize that He can help even the most apparently helpless human being, for God still has the power to transform shattered lives.

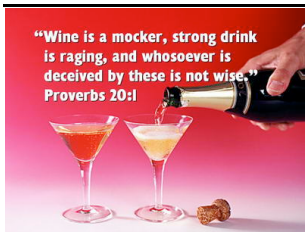


He says, "Ask and you **will** receive..."



Whoever comes to Me, I will never drive away." John 6:37 NIV

If you don't drink, make a commitment today that you won't ever start. If you are a drinker, please stop before the damage becomes permanent.



©John Foxx #FO2135

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink  
is raging, and whosoever is  
deceived by these is not wise."  
Proverbs 20:1

God's Word warns us about the use of alcohol. It says, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived by these is not wise." Proverbs 20:1 KJV

Life is all too short. Give yourself and your family, every advantage. Follow God's wisdom and avoid alcohol entirely. You'll be glad!

# Alcohol

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