

Alcohol & Your Health: What are the Risks?

The Damage You Can't Always See

If you have a long-term health condition, alcohol can make it worse. For example, if you have diabetes, heart disease, or high blood pressure, drinking any amount of alcohol can make your condition worse.

Tell your health care providers about your drinking habits. Being open and honest will help them to understand you as a person and recommend the best treatment choices for you.

Cancer

- Alcohol increases your risk of cancer.
- Drinking too much alcohol increases your risk for develop cancers of the:
 - Mouth
 - Breast
 - Throat
 - Liver
 - Colon

Brain

- Mood and behavior changes
- Learning and memory problems
- Poor balance and reaction time

Heart & Lungs

- Lung infection (Pneumonia)
- High blood pressure
- Weakening of heart muscle
- Irregular heartbeat
- Heart attack
- Stroke

Arms & Legs

- Swelling
- Pain and tingling
- Body shakes or tremors

Sexual & Reproductive Health

Men

- Low sex drive
- Not able to have an erection

Women

- Periods that last longer than normal
- No period at all

Reduce a couple's chances of getting pregnant

Risky sexual behaviors, like

- Unprotected sex
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Unplanned pregnancy

Drinking during pregnancy

- Birth defects
- Miscarriage
- Premature birth

Liver & Pancreas

- Liver disease/failure
- Wasting away of liver (cirrhosis)
- Injury to the pancreas (pancreatitis)

Digestive System

- Heartburn
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Bleeding from esophagus or stomach

