

Healthy Drinker PROFILE

Healthy Drinkers:

● Recognize Alcohol as a Potent Drug

Ethanol is the active ingredient. Classified as food, it has 100 calories per ounce of 100 proof distilled spirits and has no nutritional value. 1 can (12 oz.) beer = 1 glass (5 oz.) wine = 1 shot (1.5 oz.) of 80 proof liquor. It takes about one hour per drink to "clear" alcohol from the body. When not used responsibly, alcohol can become addictive (habit-forming).

● Know your Family History

Healthy drinkers are more likely to come from families where the parents were not heavy drinkers and did not send conflicting messages about alcohol use. Most children of alcoholics do not develop problems with alcohol. However, children of alcoholics are twice as likely to develop a problem with alcohol than children of non-alcoholic parents. The healthy drinker is aware of the pattern of alcohol use by his parents and grandparents and uses this information to develop effective drinking strategies.

● Drink One or Two Drinks Daily or Less

That old standby of "know your limit" is too ambiguous. Many people believe they "know their limit" but their limit is too high. Some of these people end up as chronic alcoholics. A more precise definition of a safe limit is needed. Research supports the following guideline: the average healthy adult who drinks one or two drinks or less daily will suffer no health impairment and will not develop alcohol addiction.

● Abstain Periodically From Alcohol Use

Periodic abstinence allows the muscles and organs of the regular drinker opportunity to "detoxify" from alcohol breakdown products. The most important reason for the healthy drinker to abstain regularly is to maintain a healthy relationship with alcohol by avoiding tolerance to an addictive drug. Healthy drinkers respect the decision made by non-drinkers and provide alcohol free beverages when entertaining.

● Identify Healthy Role Models and Protective Cultural Rituals

There are many adult drinkers who enjoy alcohol without having problems. Cultures and families where drinking is common but alcohol abuse is not, have rules and rituals which protect them from harm. Healthy drinkers drink within these rules and seek drinking advice from adults who have a history of responsible alcohol use.

● Drink for Positive Reasons

The healthy drinker drinks to celebrate, share and communicate, not to relieve pain, forget problems, and overcome fears.

Health Enhancement
Division of Student Affairs