

Wellness Articles

Attached are weekly health and wellness articles provided by Alberta Health Services. As a way to help all Albertans live a healthy life, we welcome and encourage weekly newspapers, community newsletters and other publications to reproduce this information free of charge. Credit to Alberta Health Services or the identified content provider would be appreciated.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

Proposed publication date: January 08, 2018
Content provided by: Alberta Health Services

Reduce alcohol for your health

When you drink alcohol, you may be putting your health and safety at risk.

Your risk of harm increases with each drink that you have. And your risk of harm increases with how often you drink at amounts above the low-risk drinking guidelines, even if you do this only now and then.

Drinking alcohol may:

- Harm your liver, pancreas, nervous system, heart, and brain.
- Cause high blood pressure, depression, stomach problems, or sexual problems.
- Contribute to the development of some cancers, such as cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, colon, and breast.
- Cause memory loss and affect your ability to think, learn, and reason.
- Cause harm to your developing baby (fetus) if you drink during pregnancy.
- Lead to problems at work, school, or home.
- Increase the risk of car crashes and violent behaviour.
- Cause you to develop an alcohol use problem.

In general, limit how much you drink. You can reduce your long-term health risks by drinking no more than Canadian health experts recommend:

- If you're a man, have no more than 3 standard drinks a day on most days and no more than 15 drinks a week.
- If you're a woman, have no more than 2 standard drinks a day on most days and no more than 10 drinks a week.

If you choose to drink, keep the amount of alcohol you drink within the recommended limits. Drinking at the upper limits should only happen once in a while, not every day or week. Plan non-drinking days every week to avoid developing a habit.

Keep in mind that a safe amount of alcohol for one person may be too much for another. Because of things like age, sex, weight, and health history, alcohol can affect people differently.



If you're an adult who doesn't weigh a lot, is younger than 25 or older than 65, or isn't used to drinking, you need to be even more careful about how much alcohol you drink.

If you choose to drink, here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of getting sick or injured:

- Have a meal or a snack with your drink. Don't drink on an empty stomach.
- Drink slowly. Don't have more than 2 standard drinks in any 3-hour period.
- Have a glass of water or non-alcoholic, caffeine-free beverage (such as a soft drink or fruit juice) between drinks.
- Avoid risky situations and activities. Don't drink and drive, and don't get in a car with a driver who has been drinking.
- Don't take over-the-counter or prescription medicines that interact with alcohol.
- Limit how much you drink.

If you think you're drinking too much, you might want to cut back.

Alberta Health Services offers a wide range of services for individuals looking for help for someone they care about, or for themselves.

For more information, and to find an addictions services office near you, call the Addiction Helpline at 1-866-332-2322. It's free, confidential and available 24 hours a day.