

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention

This information is to assist employees and students of the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine to increase their knowledge about alcohol and substance abuse, to raise awareness of each individual in self monitoring against alcohol and substance abuse, and in seeking assistance when identified.

The use of alcohol is prohibited on college grounds. Employees using alcohol on grounds or arriving at work in an intoxicated state will be suspended. If no crime or arrest has occurred, the employee may be offered assistance. A 3 person panel will be formed by the Dean to review the possible actions to be taken regarding these unprofessional behaviors by the employee. The panel will make a recommendation as to evaluation for a possible substance abuse problem, possible treatment, and/or temporary suspension. An employee who has been suspended may be required to have substance abuse screening and evaluation and a treatment program prior to returning. If treatment is recommended and the employee does not comply, dismissal will occur. In such cases the information is confidential to only those who are obliged to follow the individual's progress.

Students who use alcohol on grounds or who arrive at school in an intoxicated state will be temporarily suspended. An Honor Code Council will be called to review the case. If an arrest or other circumstance classify a Class II Honor Code offense, the student will have a Behavioral Board hearing instead of an Honor Code Council.

Each person whether an employee or student should feel safe in self reporting and seeking assistance if they determine that a problem exists. Human resources (employees) or the Associate Vice President of Student Services (students) will assist an individual who self reports and wishes to be evaluated and treated if indicated, while holding their information in confidence.

Before beginning the module please complete the Alcohol Knowledge Pre-Test. Answer each as True or False, then score your knowledge following the education.

1. Alcohol has been used as a medicine.
2. Alcohol is digested in the same way that food is digested.
3. Moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages is generally not harmful to the body.
4. An estimated 85% of the adult Americans who drink are alcohol abusers.
5. Alcoholic beverages do not provide weight-increasing calories.
6. A blood alcohol concentration of 0.10% is the legal definition of alcohol intoxication in most states with respect to driving.
7. Alcohol is not a drug.
8. Approximately 10% of fatal highway accidents are alcohol-related.
9. Eating while drinking slows the absorption of alcohol in the body.
10. It takes about as many hours as the number of beers drunk for the liver to completely burn up the alcohol ingested.

11. Alcohol is considered a stimulant.
12. The most commonly drunk alcoholic beverages in the United States are distilled liquors (e.g., whiskey, gin, vodka).
13. To prevent a hangover, one should sip one's drink slowly, eat while drinking, have no more than one drink an hour, and not over-drink one's limit.
14. "Proof" on a bottle of liquor represents half the percent of alcohol contained in the bottle.
15. Alcohol consumption improves sexual performance.
16. A person cannot become an alcoholic by just drinking beer.
17. Drinking milk before alcohol slows down the absorption of alcohol into the body because it coats the stomach.
18. Responsible drinking can contribute to a state of relaxation, enhanced social interactions, and a feeling of well-being.
19. Drinking coffee or taking a cold shower can be an effective way of decreasing blood alcohol levels.

Education: Making Healthy Choices regarding Drinking, Moderation, and Abstinence

"Wellness" is about increasing healthy habits and reducing unhealthy ones. Many people say they use alcohol or other drugs to "feel good." Consider reasons for drinking, and for not drinking:

Positive aspects of drinking Negative aspects of drinking

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| • socializing | • losing control |
| • relaxing | • getting sick |
| • fitting in | • gaining weight |
| • having fun | • having accidents |

Making healthy choices for feeling good means learning to get what is healthy for us, and avoiding the unhealthy things we don't want. If your choices include drinking alcohol, think about drinking safely to avoid any negative consequences.

Drinking safely

Most of the harmful effects of alcohol come from drinking too much. How much is too much? That varies with age, sex, size, and even how tired you are. It also varies with what you've had to eat, previous drinking experience, and genetics.

One common guideline is to limit your drinking to one drink an hour, because that is the average rate at which our bodies absorb alcohol. However, people who weigh less or are unaccustomed to drinking are more likely to be noticeably impaired even when drinking at this rate. When you start to feel lightheaded, dizzy, or less coordinated, you are already impaired and at risk of injuring ourselves or others. Here are some ways to enjoy a drink without its negative effects:

- eat first (not just while drinking), foods with protein work best
- drink slowly one drink per hour is good, if you feel you need a drink before the hour is up, alternate with non-alcoholic drinks and choose your safe limit in advance (ie: 1 drink per hour up to 3)
- establish your own safe limit and stick to it

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, looking into the potential benefits of alcohol, recommend that those who can safely drink not drink more than:

- **one drink a day for women and people over 60**
- **two drinks a day for men.**

A "drink" is 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of liquor. These all contain the same amount of alcohol--your brain can't tell the difference between a beer and a shot.

Choosing not to drink

There are many good reasons to choose not to drink. Here are some important reasons not to drink:

- you don't want to
- you're upset
- you're taking other drugs and medications
- you'll be driving, boating, or using other machinery
- you're pregnant
- you're underage
- you're a recovering alcoholic

It is hard to be the only person at an event who isn't drinking alcohol. Choosing to drink another beverage other than alcohol is not something you need to defend. If you feel awkward, you could:

- be with a friend who also is not drinking alcohol
- be the designated driver
- drink from a similar container (juice and soda can come in cups, bottles, and cans too)
- tell people you're on a "health kick"
- if you feel harassed for your choices, you can always leave; you deserve better than to be around people who don't respect your choices
- remember a third of the population doesn't drink alcohol!

Determining if you have a problem with drinking.

Most people have used alcohol in one form or another. but many don't realize that young people and successful people can have a drinking problem as well. It is advisable then to use this screening tool to see if you have a problem with drinking or if you are developing a problem with drinking.

Students may contact the Assistant Vice President for Student Services if the student feels he/she or someone he/she knows has a problem with drinking. Confidentiality will be followed as long as the student is obtaining help with the problem and the problem is resolved. (It is important to note that when additional conditions exist such as arrests or harm to others occur, students are subject to Behavioral policies.) Faculty may self report a problem to Human Resources where he or she will be referred and followed with confidentiality.

Students who do not self report and when actions are reported for actions considered unprofessional and/or unethical Behavior, students may be subject to Behavioral policies. (see this section of the catalog under current students).

Do I have a problem: 20 questions:

1. Do you lose time from classes due to drinking?
2. Do you drink because you are uncomfortable in social situations?
3. Do you drink to build up your self confidence?
4. Is drinking affecting your relationships with friends?
5. Do you drink alone?
6. Do you drink to escape from studies or home worries?
7. Do you feel guilty or depressed after drinking?
8. Does it bother you if someone says that maybe you drink too much?
9. Do you have to take a drink when you go out on a date?
10. Do you get along better with other people when you drink?
11. Do you get into financial troubles over buying liquor?
12. Do you feel more important when you drink?
13. Have you lost friends since you started drinking?
14. Do you drink more than most of your friends?
15. Have you started hanging around with a crowd that drinks more than your old friends?
16. Do you drink until you just couldn't drink anymore?
17. Have you ever had a complete loss of memory from drinking?
18. Have you ever been to a hospital or been arrested due to drunken behavior?
19. Do you turn off to any studies or lectures about drinking?
20. Do you think you have a problem with alcohol?

If you answered yes to some of these questions, then you have some of the symptoms that indicate a problem with alcohol. Remember, there is no intelligent reason to deny that you have a health problem. If you think you do have a problem, the most important thing is to do something about it!

Alcohol abuse is a problem that can affect people of any age. Here are some additional signs that someone has a problem with alcohol.

- Family or social problems associated with drinking.
- Hiding liquor.
- Lying about drinking (minimizing the number of drinks or the fact of drinking at all).
- Making promises about drinking to oneself or others ("to cut down on drinking," "to be more careful," etc.).
- Drinking to escape from pressure or to solve life's problems.
- Feeling guilty after drinking or regret over what was done while drinking.
- Getting drunk even when intending to stay sober.
- Friends sometimes express concern over the amount of drinking one does.
- Significantly increased tolerance to alcohol (early indication of problem drinking).
- Drinking capacity, once big, is now dropping (later indication of problem drinking).
- "Blackouts"--not recalling the drinking episode.
- Increased absenteeism and lateness (job or classes).
- More susceptibility to accidents and illness.
- Preoccupation with drinking.
- Marked changes in behavior or personality when drinking.
- Getting drunk frequently.
- Gulping drinks.
- Academic or job difficulties related to drinking.

If you (or someone you know) are showing these warning signs, please think about getting help or getting your friend help. The office of Human Resources is available to all employees and the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs is available to all students who are in need of assistance to help you to navigate the local resources for obtaining help.

Types of Help for Alcohol and Drug Abuse

You can find many different kinds of help for a drinking or drug problem. Availability of kinds of help and helping agencies vary from area to area.

Individual Counseling

In individual counseling, the person meets for a period of time with a professional substance abuse counselor. The counselor supports the client's non-use through a variety of techniques. The counselor may have expertise in other mental health areas to help the client resolve problems in his or her life that might be contributing to the substance abuse. Individual Counseling is available in the community through many private practices and through the Community Services Board. Human Resources will help you navigate the resources available.

Medication

Physicians can prescribe medications that help the person stay substance free. Antabuse causes illness when alcohol is consumed. Naltrexone can help stop the craving or desire to drink or take drugs.

Detox

When someone decides to quit drinking or using drugs, it is important to see a qualified counselor or physician to be assessed for how best to stop using. Drug or alcohol withdrawal can put a person's life at risk. Medications are often prescribed to help ease the person off his or her drug(s) of choice. Detox can be accomplished in a variety of settings, depending on how complex or medically compromised a person's health and drug problem are. Detox settings include medical hospitals and alcohol and drug detox and treatment facilities.

Inpatient Treatment

Inpatient treatment provides a highly structured program that involves both individual therapy and treatment groups. The goal of an inpatient program is to help the person become drug free and then to prepare him or her for a life back in the community. Family members often attend special programs to help with the changes the whole family will go through and to educate them about the illness.

Intensive Outpatient Treatment

Like inpatient treatment, intensive outpatient treatment provides both individual therapy and group work. The major difference between the two is that the patient does not reside at the facility. Intensive outpatient treatment programs may require the person to attend the center six hours a day, seven days a week, or attend several nights a week.

Family Help and Interventions

The family of a substance abuser can be a very powerful resource for treatment or help. It is often easiest for a family member to confront someone about a problem and also provide support after the person has asked for help. This confrontation is often, and best, done through an intervention. The family talks to a substance abuse professional trained to help with interventions. Through this consultation, family members can get prepared to help the alcoholic or addict in a way that can motivate him or her to follow through with treatment. Equally important to an alcohol or addict getting help is the family receiving help as well. The family members have experienced problems related to the addiction and may not be aware of the total impact this has had on all of their lives. Family members should be educated about alcoholism/addiction and should learn new ways to communicate with each other. The whole family will experience changes. It is important for them to learn how to do this together.

Self Help Recovery Groups

Self-help groups are available in almost every city and town across the country. [Alcoholics Anonymous](#) (AA) was the first of the 12-step self-help recovery groups, starting in Akron, Ohio in 1935. Now there are 12-step groups for almost every problem. For alcoholics and drug addicts there is AA and [Narcotics Anonymous](#) (NA) and in larger areas Cocaine Anonymous (CA). In addition other self-help groups for addictions have formed including Rational Recovery and Women for Sobriety. Family members and friends have Al-Anon, Alateen, and Nar-Anon groups available.

Twelve-step self-help programs focus on members sharing with others members their experience, strength, and hope in terms of recovery from alcoholism and drug addiction, or for family members and friends, their experience of learning to live and cope with an addict or alcoholic, irrespective of whether or not they recover. Newcomers are encouraged to make contact with someone before attending a first meeting so you can ask questions before and after you go. Many meetings have a newcomers group as part of one of their regular weekly meetings. Newcomers are also encouraged to attend the meetings for awhile to learn what they are about and to attend different groups as they all have their own "personality."

There are many different types of 12-step meetings including Closed Meetings - only alcoholics or addicts may attend; Open Meetings - anyone can attend; Discussion Meetings - any topic pertaining to alcoholism/addiction or recovery from alcoholism/addiction can be discussed; Speaker Meetings - one or several speakers tell their stories of alcoholism/addiction and recovery; and Study Group Meetings including Step Meetings where one or more of the 12 steps are studied and discussed, usually one step a week, and meetings where in AA the "Big Book" text or in NA the basic NA text is studied or other approved literature produced by the world service office of each self-help group.

Once someone has gone to a few meetings and has picked a group he or she is comfortable with, known as a "home group," then a "sponsor" may be chosen. The purpose of a sponsor is to have someone who can personally guide another in recovery through sharing their experience, strength, and hope -- to offer support. There are no rules or guidelines on how to choose a sponsor but new members are encouraged to choose someone who they admire for their success in recovery, who has been able to stay sober for a few years, and who is the same gender.

Effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Using alcohol and other drugs carries risks. Alcohol and drugs impair your judgement, making you more likely to hurt yourself or others, to have trouble with the law, to do poorly at work and school, and to have relationship trouble. Alcohol and drugs also have specific health risks: they can damage major organs, increase your risk of cancers, and even cause death.

What is Alcoholism?

Alcoholism is a medical disease. It involves periodic or constant:

- impaired control over drinking
- preoccupation with alcohol
- use and abuse of alcohol in spite of adverse consequences
- distorted thinking, especially denial.

Alcoholism stems from genetic, environmental, and psychosocial factors. A high percentage of alcoholics have a genetic predisposition to the disease, although genetic predisposition can be overcome. Genetics are risk factors, not destiny.

People with the disease of alcoholism often need treatment, counseling, or medical attention to learn how to stop drinking and to live a healthier life.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and National Institute of Health offer treatment referral information. In North Carolina, call the Alcohol and Drug Council of North Carolina at 1-800-688-4232 to find treatment services in your community.

What is Alcohol Abuse?

Alcohol abuse is also a serious medical and social problem, but is not the same as alcoholism. Alcohol abuse is the intentional overuse of alcohol, i.e., to the point of drunkenness. This includes occasional and celebratory over-drinking.

Not all people who abuse alcohol become alcoholics, but alcohol abuse by itself can have serious medical effects. Overuse of alcohol is considered to be:

- more than 3-4 drinks per occasion for women
- more than 4-5 drinks per occasion for men.

One drink equals one (12-ounce) bottle of beer or wine cooler, one (5-ounce) glass of wine, or one and a half ounces of liquor.

The NIAAA and NIH offer advice on How to Cut Down on Your Drinking.

Now test your knowledge again:

Answer each as True or False, then score your knowledge following the education.

1. Alcohol has been used as a medicine.
2. Alcohol is digested in the same way that food is digested.
3. Moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages is generally not harmful to the body.
4. An estimated 85% of the adult Americans who drink are alcohol abusers.
5. Alcoholic beverages do not provide weight-increasing calories.
6. A blood alcohol concentration of 0.10% is the legal definition of alcohol intoxication in most states with respect to driving.
7. Alcohol is not a drug.
8. Approximately 10% of fatal highway accidents are alcohol-related.
9. Eating while drinking slows the absorption of alcohol in the body.
10. It takes about as many hours as the number of beers drunk for the liver to completely burn up the alcohol ingested.
11. Alcohol is considered a stimulant.
12. The most commonly drunk alcoholic beverages in the United States are distilled liquors (e.g., whiskey, gin, vodka).
13. To prevent a hangover, one should sip one's drink slowly, eat while drinking, have no more than one drink an hour, and not over-drink one's limit.
14. "Proof" on a bottle of liquor represents half the percent of alcohol contained in the bottle.
15. Alcohol consumption improves sexual performance.
16. A person cannot become an alcoholic by just drinking beer.
17. Drinking milk before alcohol slows down the absorption of alcohol into the body because it coats the stomach.
18. Responsible drinking can contribute to a state of relaxation, enhanced social interactions, and a feeling of well-being.
19. Drinking coffee or taking a cold shower can be an effective way of decreasing blood alcohol levels.

Score Your Knowledge: What do you know about Alcohol?

1. Alcohol has been used as a medicine. TRUE

Alcohol was used for centuries as a medicine in childbirth, sedation, and surgery.

2. Alcohol is digested in the same way that food is digested. FALSE

Alcohol is unique because it requires no digestion. It can be absorbed directly from the stomach, and even more rapidly from the small intestine.

3. Moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages is generally not harmful to the body. TRUE

Some studies show that moderate drinkers (those drinking no more than one to two drinks a day) tend to be at less risk for heart attacks than abstainers or heavy drinkers. However, it's not recommended that you start drinking for health benefits as the likelihood of alcoholism in those who drink daily is much higher. Daily drinking is not recommended by any health professions organization and organizations who treat alcoholism strongly recommend against it.

4. An estimated 85% of the adult Americans who drink are alcohol abusers. FALSE

Of the adult Americans who drink, approximately 15% abuse alcohol. The majority of people who drink do so in a responsible manner which does not lead to alcohol-related problems. It is important to note that responsible drinking does not only refer to the amount but to the activities in which one should not participate while drinking such as driving, operating machinery, providing healthcare, or any other activity in which it is important that one's judgment not be affected.

Note: The 15% of drinkers who abuse alcohol account for far more than half of alcohol sales.

5. Alcoholic beverages do not provide weight-increasing calories. FALSE

Alcohol does contain calories:

- a. alcohol contains 7 calories per gram
- b. carbohydrates contain 4 calories per gram
- c. fat contains 9 calories per gram

In addition, alcohol affects the blood sugar levels in diabetics, makes your medication for infection or hypertension ineffective, and can have several other detrimental effects on your health.

6. A blood alcohol concentration of 0.10% is the legal definition of alcohol intoxication in most states with respect to driving. FALSE

The blood alcohol concentration limit is 0.08% in some states while others have 1.0. In Sweden it is 0.05%. Driving ability can be significantly impaired well below 0.10% BAC. For most people, a blood alcohol concentration of 0.05% doubles their risk of having a car crash. [A chart of BAC limits by US state](#) is provided by the National Commission Against Drunk Driving.

7. Alcohol is not a drug. FALSE

Alcohol is a drug. It has been used by most societies and cultures throughout history. It is our most used and most abused recreational drug.

8. Approximately 10% of fatal highway accidents are alcohol-related. FALSE

Approx. 50% of fatal highway accidents are alcohol-related.

9. Eating while drinking slows the absorption of alcohol in the body. TRUE

Eating before and while drinking slows down the passage of alcohol from the stomach to the small intestine. Because 80% of the alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream from the small intestine, having food in the stomach that absorbs some of the alcohol will help slow absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream.

10. It takes about as many hours as the number of beers drunk for the liver to completely burn up the alcohol ingested. TRUE

Alcohol is metabolized by the liver at the rate of approximately one drink an hour. One drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, 4 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80 proof liquor.

11. Few women become alcoholics. FALSE

Although the estimates of women alcoholics vary from one quarter to one half of all alcoholics, it is clear that the number of female alcoholics is sizable and has been increasing. In the past, female alcoholics and problem drinkers may have been more reluctant to seek treatment than men who experience drinking problems, but fortunately that situation is beginning to change.

12. Alcohol is considered a stimulant. FALSE

Alcohol is a depressant drug; this means it slows down (or depresses) the Central Nervous System. Some people mistakenly think it is a stimulant because initially it reduces inhibitions, encouraging some people to do things they might not do otherwise.

13. The most commonly alcoholic beverage consumed in the United States are distilled liquors (e.g., whiskey, gin, vodka). FALSE

Beer is the most commonly consumed alcoholic beverage in the US.

14. To prevent a hangover, one should sip one's drink slowly, eat while drinking, have no more than one drink an hour, and not over-drink one's limit.

TRUE and this is to prevent an alcohol toxic state. Charts exist that will assist you in assessing your limit according to weight, height, and sex. HOWEVER each person as an individual may find that your limit may be lower than the recommended. If drinking the recommended amount still causes you to reach a state where you have symptoms of a hangover or have taken actions not characteristic of your normal behaviors, you may wish to lower your limit. In general if an adult limits their drinking to not greater than one drink per hour and not greater than three drinks per night, you are within safe limits for not becoming drunk.

15. "Proof" on a bottle of liquor represents half the percent of alcohol contained in the bottle.

FALSE Proof equals twice the percent of alcohol. For example, 90 proof whiskey is 45% alcohol.

16. Alcohol consumption improves sexual performance. FALSE

"It provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance" -- from Shakespeare's Macbeth.

Alcohol may increase aggressive behavior, including sexually aggressive behavior, because it reduces inhibitions. However, in large amounts it can interfere with performance. With chronic heavy drinking and with alcoholism, there is often a degeneration and dysfunction of the sex organs, with associated sexual problems (not to mention the emotional aspects of sexuality that can be affected by heaving drinking).

17. A person cannot become an alcoholic by just drinking beer. FALSE

People can abuse any type of alcoholic beverage including beer. There are alcoholics who drink nothing harder than "light" beer. Beer has the same type of alcohol that wine and distilled spirits have (ethyl alcohol).

18. Drinking milk before alcohol slows down the absorption of alcohol into the body because it coats the stomach. FALSE

It helps slow down the absorption of alcohol by diluting it, not by coating the stomach. Any liquid will dilute alcohol, and food helps absorb alcohol so that it passes more slowly from the stomach to the small intestine. Most of the alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream from the small intestine rather than from the stomach.

19. Responsible drinking can contribute to a state of relaxation, enhanced social interactions, and a feeling of well-being. TRUE

Responsible drinking means stopping before you are drunk. It means not driving a vehicle if you have had any alcohol. The US Department of Health and Human Services guidelines for moderate drinking is no more than one drink a day for women and people over 60 and no more than two drinks a day for men under 60. Recovering alcoholics should not drink at all, because they cannot control the amount of drinking they do.

20. Drinking coffee or taking a cold shower can be an effective way of decreasing blood alcohol levels. FALSE

The healthy liver oxidates or metabolizes alcohol at the rate of about one drink per hour. Therefore, only time will sober up a drunk person. Coffee, cold-showers, fresh air, and exercise do not reduce blood alcohol levels.

Note: This exam is Adapted from information from Rutgers University, UNC, NIH, and US DHHS.