

Alcohol Awareness



ALCOHOL IS AN UNHEALTHY COPING MECHANISM

You might think that alcohol helps you cope with stress, but it is not a good coping mechanism. It is known to increase the symptoms of panic and anxiety disorders, depression and other mental disorders, and increase the risk of family and domestic violence. Even with moderate drinking, one should take caution that alcohol is not being used to cope with stress, anxiety, or boredom.

While some adults may be able to enjoy an occasional glass of wine or mixed drink at home, drinking too much can cause significant health problems including a weakened immune system.

EXCESSIVE DRINKING



WOMEN



- ▶ **Binge drinking** is having **4** or more drinks in one occasion
- ▶ **Heavy drinking** is having **8** or more drinks per week

MEN



- ▶ **Binge drinking** is having **5** or more drinks in one occasion
- ▶ **Heavy drinking** is having **15** or more drinks per week

An occasion is one sitting or within two to three hours.

INDICATORS OF RISKY OR EXCESSIVE DRINKING

- Drinking more, or longer than you intend
- Trying to cut down or stop drinking, but are not able to
- Having to drink more than you once did to get the effect you want
- Continuing to drink even though it makes you feel depressed or anxious or adds to another health problem
- Spending a lot of time drinking or thinking about alcohol
- Finding that drinking often interferes with daily activities, family, friends and/or work
- Experiencing symptoms of withdrawal when you don't drink (withdrawal symptoms include: shakiness, sweating, tremors, headaches, anxiety, irritability, and/or insomnia)
- Have been arrested or had other legal problems due to drinking
- Loved ones and/or trusted friends have made comments about your drinking pattern

MONITORING YOUR ALCOHOL USE CAN HELP YOU PREVENT RISKY DRINKING

- Set a daily and weekly drinking limit. Write down your limit and keep it with you
- Pace your drinking. Have no more than one standard drink per hour
- Record how much you drink each day
- Avoid situations and triggers that cause you to drink
- Ask a friend who does not drink to help you stay within your limit
- Speak with your doctor and/or seek treatment for your alcohol use



If you or a friend is struggling and need additional support and resources call our local addiction helpline at 330-678-3006

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Concerned about your use? Take a free anonymous screening at <https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/portagecounty>