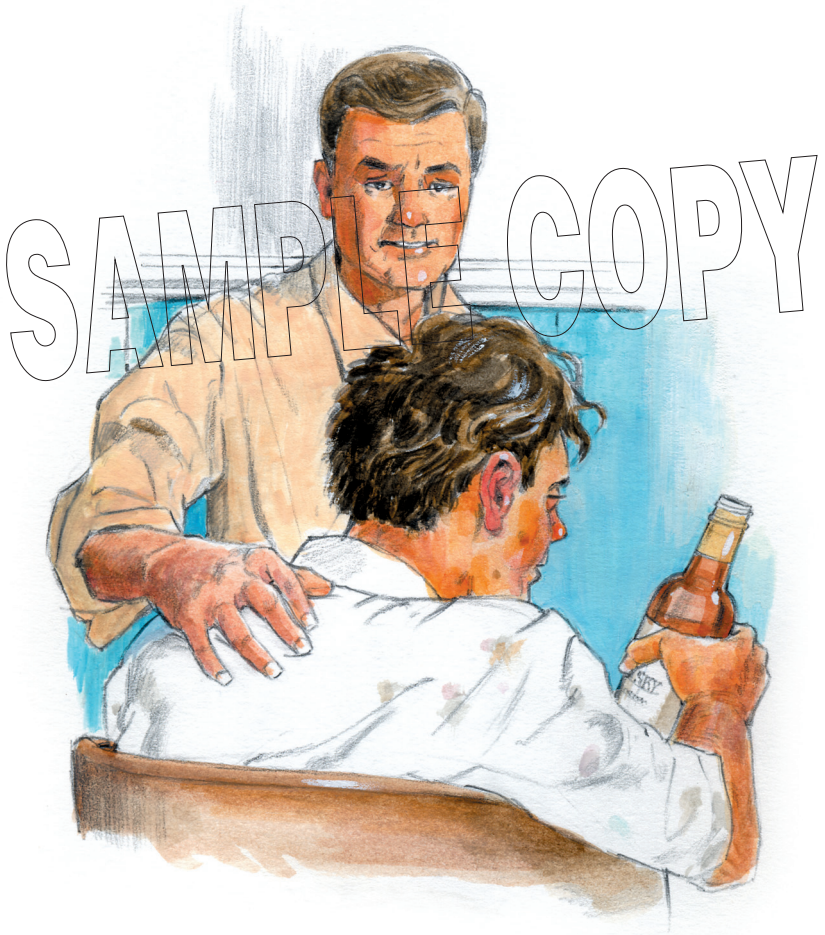


Alcohol

Bad News in a Bottle



Guides for Good Living

Alcohol is a drug.

It is legal for people over the age of 21 to drink. But drinking too much is bad for you no matter how old you are.

All of the drinks below contain the same amount of alcohol.



It does not matter how old someone is, or how much they weigh. It does not matter how much experience they have with alcohol. **Even one drink will have an effect.**

After just one drink a person may:

- Feel dizzy
- Become clumsy
- Have blurred vision
- Feel sick to their stomach

Drunk driving kills.

Just one drink affects a person's judgement. One drink affects their balance. **It is dangerous to drive even after just one drink.**

Over 300,000 people are hurt every year in car accidents because of drinking. Thousands of people die.



Never drive a car if you have been drinking. Never get in a car with a driver who has been drinking.

Drinking hurts health.

The more a person drinks, the more it hurts their health. **Drinking too much at one time can kill a person.** This is called alcohol poisoning.

Drinking too much alcohol over a lifetime will cause serious health problems:

- Heart disease
- Liver disease
- Colon cancer
- Weakening of bones (osteoporosis)
- Strokes
- Brain shrinkage



Alcohol and Pregnancy

Drinking alcohol during pregnancy is very dangerous for the baby.

Mothers who drink alcohol give their babies Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome gives the baby brain damage and other birth defects.



Drinking alcohol during pregnancy is the #1 cause of mental retardation in newborn babies.

Alcohol is addictive.

Drinking too much can also cause dependence. The body gets used to having alcohol and wants more.



A person with an alcohol dependence may show these signs:

- Heavy sweating
- Hands shaking
- Stomach problems
- Seeing or hearing things

What is Alcoholism?

Some people cannot stop drinking alcohol. This is a disease called alcoholism. A person with this disease is called an alcoholic.

Alcoholics are addicted to alcohol. They cannot stop drinking without getting help.

If you are worried about how much someone drinks, talk to them about getting help. More than 12 million Americans have an alcohol problem.

Most alcoholics never get the treatment they need. Some places to find treatment programs are:

- Hospitals
- Public health clinics
- Church groups
- Community centers
- Alcoholics Anonymous

**Know the facts. Know the risks.
Don't abuse alcohol.**

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INSIGHT
series

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