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Binge Drinking

Binge Drinking is the consumption of four or more drinks in a row, on at least one occasion and is currently the number one substance abuse among young people. We have all heard the stories from our peers how they drank all night and worked all day only to start the cycle over again and again. Many of us have our own stories of an alcohol adventure and for some, this may be the norm.

Though Binge Drinking may seem fun at the time it is not without its consequences. When you choose to drink, you are putting yourself at risk physically and emotionally. Binge Drinking can make you relax, become reckless or foolish. You may be friendlier with people you don't know, or romantic with someone you don't know or like. You may say yes to sex without thinking about the consequences, which increases your chance of getting an STD or HIV. Binge Drinking can also lead to drunken driving arrests, motor vehicle accidents, date rape, and some long-term difficulties such as liver damage and alcoholism.



Be Smart

If you choose to use alcohol, make sure you drink responsibly. Here are some tips to help keep your risk of impairment as low as possible.

- ◆ Eat before you drink. The food will slow down the absorption of the alcohol.
- ◆ Don't try to quench your thirst with alcohol drinks, this only makes you thirstier. Plain old water is best when you're really thirsty.
- ◆ Sip. Don't gulp. If you're a guy, you'll look cool. If you're a woman, you'll look refined. And no matter who you are, you'll probably feel better the next morning.
- ◆ Choose drinks with food-based mixers such as vegetable and fruit juices, which lower the risk of impairment; water or carbonated mixers increase impairment. Also, choose drinks with low alcohol content.
- ◆ Limit your drinking to no more than one or two drinks per day. Don't drink every day and not more than four days in a week.
- ◆ Don't "power drink." In other words, slow the rate at which you put away the alcohol. It's not a race. Try to limit yourself to no more than one drink per hour.
- ◆ Give yourself a break; alternate booze with non-alcoholic beverages.
- ◆ Be strong and don't give in to those immature jerks who use peer pressure to get you to drink more than you want.
- ◆ Make sure you have a battle buddy / designated driver that has your back and will make sure you get back home safely. Also, give everyone a chance to be the hero by taking turns as the designated driver.
- ◆ If you are the designated driver or simply choose not to drink think about what you will drink instead of alcohol, how you will refuse offers of alcohol drinks, and how you will take care of yourself and others that get drunk.

When the party time is over take a break from boozing - set aside an alcohol-free period every now and then. Use this time to improve your health and gain perspective on you activities.

