

### Introduction

Drinking too much alcohol on a regular basis is harmful to your health. Alcohol is a drug that affects every body system, though the detrimental effects vary for each individual.

- The volume of alcohol consumed, genetics, gender, body mass, and general state of health all influence how a person's health responds to chronic heavy drinking.
- When the body takes in more alcohol than it can metabolize, the excess builds up in the bloodstream. The heart circulates the blood alcohol throughout the body, leading to changes in chemistry and normal body functions.
- Even a one-time binge-drinking episode can result in significant bodily impairment, damage, or death. Over time, excessive alcohol use can lead to the development of many chronic diseases and other serious health problems.

Source: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/297734.php>

### Common Risks

- Liver disease
- Pancreatitis
- Cancer
- Ulcers and gastrointestinal problems
- Immune system dysfunction
- Brain damage
- Malnourishment and vitamin deficiencies
- Osteoporosis
- Heart disease
- Accidents and injuries

### Physical Symptoms

- Change in appearance – Sudden gain or loss of weight.
- Poor physical coordination.
- Loss of appetite, increase in appetite or any changes in eating habits.
- Fatigue.
- Bloodshot or watery eyes.
- Consistently dilated pupils.
- Nausea, vomiting.
- Frequent colds, sore throat, coughing.
- Chronically inflamed nostrils, runny nose.
- Dizzy spells, stumbling, shaky hands.
- Consistent run down condition.
- Speech pattern changes, slurred speech, faster speech, slower speech.
- Irregular heartbeat.

### Excessive Alcohol Consumption



### Key Points

- Excessive alcohol use is the fourth leading preventable cause of death in the United States.
- The definition of heavy drinking is consuming eight drinks or more per week for women, and 15 or more for men.
- Per occasion, more than three drinks for women, and more than four for men is considered heavy drinking.
- Binge drinking is defined as five drinks or more for men, or four or more for women on a single occasion.
- Any alcohol consumed by pregnant women is excessive use.
- Alcohol is consistently associated with violent crime.
- 4% of the global burden of disease is attributable to alcohol.
- Alcohol consumption can cause substantial harm to the health of others besides the drinker.
- People who begin drinking at an early age are four times more likely to develop alcoholism than those who begin drinking at or after the age of 21.
- Individual differences in alcohol metabolism may put some people at greater risk for health problems.
- Depending on body weight, the blood alcohol level can raise to illegal levels after only two drinks.
- The majority of alcohol metabolism takes place in the liver; while with other organs contribute to alcohol metabolism as well.
- Research suggests that many of the toxic effects of alcohol are due to the body's coming in contact with acetaldehyde, the carcinogenic byproduct of alcohol metabolism.

