



the recovery center

Turning Points

The Recovery Center wishes you a safe and happy holiday season.

the recovery center
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Our Mission

To ensure the effective and efficient delivery of alcohol, drug addiction and mental health prevention, intervention and treatment services to promote the health and safety of the residents of Fairfield County.

Our Vision

To create a learning organization for behavioral healthcare services which promotes understanding, supports growth and fosters healing for clients, staff and community.

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Alcohol and the Holidays from NIAAA

If you're celebrating the holidays with family and friends, alcohol just might be part of the picture. Maybe you ring in the New Year with a champagne toast. You might think a drink or two helps take the edge off stressful gatherings. Maybe football, friends, and beer are one of your favorite parts of winter. People drink for many reasons. But as everyone knows, if you overdo it there will be little to celebrate the next day.

Occasional, moderate drinking usually poses few problems. However, more than 1 in 10 adults grapple with alcohol dependence, or alcoholism, at some time in their lives. Nearly 1 in 5 struggle with alcohol abuse—harmful drinking that leads to missing work, neglecting family responsibilities, or drinking in dangerous situations, like when driving. Long-term heavy drinking can damage the liver, cause several types of cancer, inflammation of the pancreas, and brain damage.

During the holidays, some people drink larger amounts of alcohol or for longer periods of time than they normally would. The consequences can range from making an embarrassing remark to being arrested for drunken driving or causing a deadly traffic crash.

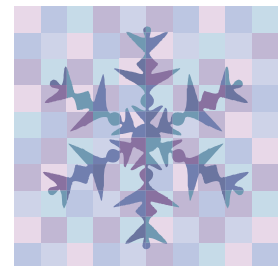
Low levels of alcohol can act as a stimulant, causing euphoria and relieving anxiety and stress. At higher levels, alcohol's impact on the brain begins to take a downturn. It can act as a depressant, and cause people to become sleepy and to lose their balance and coordination. Inhibition and judgment are also affected, and emotions can become unstable.

Alcohol quickly moves from the stomach into the bloodstream, where it travels to all major organs and tissues. The liver converts alcohol to other substances, but can only break down about half of an alcohol-containing beverage per hour. If a person drinks alcohol

faster than their liver can clear it, their blood alcohol level will climb. Binge drinking in particular—for men, defined as 5 or more drinks over a 2-hour period; for women, 4 or more—can quickly raise blood alcohol to an unsafe level. This excess alcohol continues to circulate throughout the body long after your last drink.

Whatever your Holiday plans might be, choose wisely so that everyone can enjoy the Holidays safely and with no regrets.

Source: Alcohol and the Holidays: Celebrate Safely; www.niaaa.nih.gov. December 2008. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2 December 2009.



Ohio Drug-Related Deaths Outpace Vehicle Crashes www.cdc.gov

New government data indicates that accidental drug-related deaths outnumber motor vehicle crash fatalities in a growing number of states. The death rates for overdoses and other drug-induced fatalities surpassed the death rates for crashes in Ohio and 15 other states in 2006. Crashes still cost more lives nationwide.

Drug overdoses make up about 90% of the drug-

related deaths. There was a sharp increase in fatalities tied to cocaine, methadone and prescription painkillers like Vicodin and OxyContin.

Declines in motor vehicle fatalities "are considered one of the great public health triumphs" of the last few decades, said Margaret Warner, an epidemiologist who co-authored the new CDC report. "But (drug) poi-

sonings are definitely going up," she added.

Source: Warner M, Chen LH, Makuc DM. *Increase in fatal poisonings involving opioid analgesics in the United States, 1999-2006*. NCHS data brief, no 22. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2009.



Depression is an Illness by Patti Waits

Suicide has been viewed for countless generations as a moral failing or spiritual weakness. It has been seen as an inability to cope with life, "the coward's way out." In fact, depression is an illness of the brain. When it is combined with stress, trauma, and genetics, the risk of suicide greatly increases. Just as diabetes is the result of low insulin production, depressed people suffer from a physical disorder.

Ninety percent of suicide completers have a depressive illness. Someone with clinical depression often feels helpless to solve problems, leading to hopelessness— a strong predictor of suicide risk.

Biological, physical, social, psychological or

spiritual factors may increase an individual's risk. For example, a family history of suicide can increase a person's risk by six times. The single biggest risk factor for suicide completion is having a depressive illness. Other factors can include 1) access to firearms, 2) a significant loss by death, separation and/or divorce, 3) social isolation and 4) alcohol or other drug problems.

There are different levels of depression. Most depressed individuals describe themselves as "blue", "sad", or "down in the dumps". Other symptoms can include:

- Over or under eating
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping a lot
- Low energy or overly tired

- Trouble concentrating
- Difficulty making decisions
- Feeling hopeless
- Self-criticism or guilt
- Lack of interest in people or activities

The most important thing to do if you suspect that you or someone you care about is suffering from depression is get professional help. Many people who are depressed are afraid to talk about it. There is no shame in having an illness. Depression is not a moral weakness, it is a disorder of the brain, and can be treated by medication, counseling or a combination of both.

Source: Waits, Patti; *The Light— A Quarterly Newsletter by the Fairfield Mental Health Consumer Group*; February 2008 .

For More Information or to Get Involved:

Fairfield County
Suicide Prevention
Coalition
(740) 681-5542

To Get Help

24 Hour
Crisis Hotline
211
or
(740) 687-TALK
(8255)

Addiction through the Christmas Season From NCADD

The Holidays can be a joyous time of year. To the estimated ten percent battling alcoholism or other drug addiction recovery, the Season can mean danger of relapse. "When you interview patients about triggers for drinking, they often say holidays and family events," says David Rosenbloom, a specialist in substance abuse at Boston University School of Public Health. "For some it's the stress of being lonely, for others it's the stress of being with people." Over Christmas and New Year, social pressure and opportunities to drink add to the intoxicating mix. Plan to remember people in recovery in your plans this holiday season.



Tips for Safer Holiday Parties From NCADD

We rarely think about how many of our holiday traditions involve alcohol and excess. Following are some suggestions to make your Holiday Season safer and more enjoyable:

- The Holidays do not have to include alcohol. When hosting, be sure to have non-alcoholic drinks available and easily accessible. A number of people should not be drinking including:
 - Anyone under 21 years of age
 - People in recovery
 - Anyone who wishes to avoid alcohol's short-and long-term effects
 - Those on certain medications
 - Women who are pregnant or trying to conceive
 - A person who is intoxicated
 - The designated driver(s)
 - Someone who has had difficulty drinking moderately in the past
- Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes kill someone every 31 minutes and non-fatally injure someone every two minutes. Insist on designated drivers and/or offer overnight accommodations.
- Alcohol affects everyone differently at varying times. Family history of addiction, age, gender, body size, stomach content, over-the-counter, illicit or prescription drug use, altitude, recent illness, tiredness and the type and amount of drink each affects a person's reaction to alcohol. Listen to your body.
- Everyone wants their children and teenagers to enjoy the season, but most importantly, we want them to be safe. Don't be afraid to talk openly with your teens and young adults about the dangers of alcohol, drugs and peer pressure. Let them know about the increase in high risk behavior during the holiday break when they have so much more free time. Remember that your own behavior is the best model for children of any age.
- The holidays can be a difficult time for many people. They can be overwhelmed with financial issues, family and shopping demands. They may feel a great deal of loneliness, stress and isolation during the season. This is especially true for anyone who is in recovery at this time of the year. They need to be sure to attend extra meetings or put in place extra supports.
- The Holidays can also be very difficult for families who have members with substance abuse problems. Don't wait for a crisis, seek help and support now. The holidays can be a troubled time in these families, but sometimes the person with the problem has hit their bottom around the holidays and is more open to seeking help. Help is available if you or someone is struggling with addiction to alcohol or another drug.

Source: *Holiday Drinking Awareness Kit*; www.ncadd.org; The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence; 8 December 2009. NCADD provides education, information, help and hope in the fight against the chronic and often fatal disease of alcoholism and other drug addictions. Since 1944, they have been committed to ridding the disease of its stigma and its sufferers from their denial and shame.