



Alcohol Use Disorder: Do I Have a Problem?

Do you want to have more fun, fit in, or cope better with your problems? It's as easy as taking a drink. That is, if you believe what you see on TV and in movies. But the truth is, the more often you rely on alcohol to relax you or make you feel good, the closer you move toward addiction. If you think you are on the path to addiction, you can take action to change your behavior. And you can find people to help you.

Do I have a problem with alcohol?

You may drink to feel like people will like you more or to loosen up. You may do it to relieve boredom or relax. But drinking has a downside. Alcohol can lead to slurred speech, poor judgment, and risky behavior. And it can lead to major health problems. These include liver and heart disease. It can also cause loss of mental function. To find out if you may have a problem with alcohol, think about the questions below. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) states any of the symptoms listed could be cause for concern. Think about these and talk with your doctor.

In the past year, have I:

- Had times when I drank more or longer than I meant to?
- Tried to cut back or stop drinking more than once, but couldn't?
- Spent a lot of time drinking? Or being sick after I drank?
- Wanted a drink so badly that I couldn't think of anything else?
- Had family, school, or work problems linked to my drinking?
- Kept drinking even though it causes problems with my relationships with my family, friends, or peers?
- Given up doing things I enjoy so I could drink?
- Taken part in risky behaviors after drinking? These may include unprotected sex or operating a car or machine after drinking.
- Kept drinking even though it makes another health problem worse? Or even if it makes me feel anxious or depressed?
- Had to drink more than I used to just to get the effect I want?
- Had withdrawal symptoms when the alcohol starts to wear off? These can include:
 - Shakiness.
 - Insomnia.
 - Sweating.
 - A racing heart.
 - Digestive upset.

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