



Alcohol and Drug Use Health Risks

Risk of addiction for all substances

Drug Type	Common Name	Health Risks
Alcohol	Booze, beer, wine, coolers, liquor	High blood pressure, higher risk of sexually transmitted diseases & unplanned pregnancy, depression, lowered resistance to disease, insomnia
Marijuana	Grass, reefer, pot, weed	Damage to heart, lungs, brain, lung cancer, decreased motivation, depression, paranoia, impaired memory
Steroids	Anabolic/Andreno-genic (roids, juice)	High blood pressure, liver and kidney damage, acne, artrophy of testes, breast enlargement in men, breast reduction in women, aggressiveness, mood swings
Solvents-Inhalants	Acetone, freons, nitrous oxide	Heart failure, respiratory arrest, liver and brain damage
Depressants	Alcohol, ludes, barbiturates	Liver damage, convulsions, depression, disorientation, insomnia
Hallucinogens	PCP, LSD, angel dust, mushrooms	Agitation, extreme hyperactivity, reduced eating, flashbacks
Stimulants	Cocaine, crack, amphetamines, diet pills	Headaches, depression; malnutrition, anorexia, strokes, seizures
Narcotics	Smack, codeine, heroine, lords	Respiratory arrest, sleepiness, organ and lung damage, nausea
Tobacco		Lung cancer, emphyzema, oral cancer

Immediate Health Risks Specific to Heavy Drinking

Excessive alcohol use has immediate effects that increase the risk of many harmful health conditions. These immediate effects are most often the result of binge drinking and include the following:

- *Unintentional injuries, including traffic injuries, falls, drownings, burns and unintentional firearm injuries.*
- *Violence, including intimate partner violence and child maltreatment. About 35% of victims' report that offenders are under the influence of alcohol. Alcohol use is also associated with 2 out of 3 incidents of intimate partner violence. Studies have also shown that alcohol is a leading factor in child maltreatment and neglect cases, and is the most frequent substance abused among these parents.*

- *Risky sexual behaviors, including unprotected sex, sex with multiple partners, and increased risk of sexual assault. These behaviors can result in unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases.*
- *Miscarriage and stillbirth among pregnant women, and a combination of physical and mental birth defects among children that last throughout life.*
- *Alcohol poisoning, a medical emergency that results from high blood alcohol levels that suppress the central nervous system and can cause loss of consciousness, low blood pressure and body temperature, coma, respiratory depression, or death.*
- *Legal implications such as DUI, public intoxication, and providing alcohol to minors.*

Long-Term Health Risks Specific to Heavy Drinking

Over time, excessive alcohol use can lead to the development of chronic diseases, neurological impairments and social problems. These include but are not limited to:

- *Neurological problems, including dementia, stroke and neuropathy.*
- *Cardiovascular problems, including myocardial infarction, cardiomyopathy, atrial fibrillation and hypertension.*
- *Psychiatric problems, including depression, anxiety, and suicide.*
- *Social problems, including unemployment, lost productivity, and family problems.*
- *Cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, colon, and breast.*
- *In general, the risk of cancer increases with increasing amounts of alcohol.*
- *Liver diseases, including:*
 - *Alcoholic hepatitis.*
 - *Cirrhosis, which is among the 15 leading causes of all deaths in the United States.*
 - *Among persons with Hepatitis C virus, worsening of liver function and interference with medications used to treat this condition.*
- *Other gastrointestinal problems, including pancreatitis and gastritis.*

Source: www.cdc.gov/Alcohol/quickstats/general_info.htm