

# SOCIAL DRINKING VS. ALCOHOL ABUSE

HEALTH TIP #15 • DECEMBER 3, 2006



At last week's Floor Party, I was supposed to present on Alcohol related issues, but we were all having way too much fun raiding the chocolate fountains and socializing. For that reason, I decided to make this Health Tip on the issues on which I was planning to present.

**Social Drinking** = Drinking to enhance fun but the drinking is not the center of fun. You can't call it social if you are passed out or blacked out and your friends have to baby-sit you.

### Knowing your Limits:

- \* Find the point when your mood is altered and you feel good but still can stay aware of your surroundings and can make wise decisions
- \* Set limits before drinking and stick to them
- \* Stay away from going into the "zone" of drunkenness where it is hard to recuperate control
- \* Stay clear from situations that don't give you choices in monitoring how much you are drinking, like drinking games, beer bongs, pre-mixed punches at parties, etc.
- \* Know what you are drinking!
- \* Assign designated drivers (and walkers)

### Tips to Staying in Control of your Inebriation

- \* When taking shots, always stay hydrated with lots of water to balance out the concentrated alcohol.
- \* Stay away from mystery drinks, like Long Island Ice Teas, punches, etc.
- \* For women, you are more sensitive to alcohol during your premenstrual time and if you take birth control.
- \* Carbonation mixed with alcohol will get you drunk more quickly, such as mixing coke or soda water with rum or vodka over juices
- \* Eat before going out for drinks to keep from getting sick or drunk faster than normal. However, salty foods will just make you thirsty and want to drink more during a party.

### High Risk Groups for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

1. History of at least 2 generations of abuse in family
2. Women who have been molested before age 12 and went for help but help wasn't there
3. Individuals with untreated or misdiagnosed mental disorders like depression or bi-polarism
4. Individuals with untreated or misdiagnosed learning disabilities like ADD

### Resources You Can Use:

1. Social Services on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Tang- 642-6074
2. Alcoholics Anonymous- <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org/?Media=PlayFlash>
3. Alanon- <http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/> 1-888-4AL-ANON
4. SISS at I-House for counseling

### This Health Tip based on:

1. Conference with Wanda Thrower in Social Services.
2. [http://helpguide.org/mental/alcohol\\_abuse\\_alcoholism\\_singns\\_effects\\_treatment.htm](http://helpguide.org/mental/alcohol_abuse_alcoholism_singns_effects_treatment.htm)
3. Buzzed, By Duke University Medical Center

### What are the signs of alcohol poisoning?

1. Lips and nail beds turning blue
2. Breathing becomes labored
3. Skin is pale, dewy, clammy
4. Non-coherence

*\*Call 911 or take the person to the hospital immediately if you think they might be experiencing these symptoms of poisoning.*

### When someone is throwing up

- Have them lie on their side in the recovery position
- Don't offer them liquids until they stop throwing up ice chips are a good alternative for hydration if the individual cannot keep in water
- Don't put them in the shower or walk around because they will risk falling and injuring themselves. Showers are especially dangerous because of the hard, slippery floors!
- Stay with them until they are stable and can care for themselves

### Abuse of Alcohol Comes in Many Forms, It can be...

- Whenever it causes you to hurt yourself or someone else while under the influence.
- Saying something you wouldn't normally say
- Having a hangover- this is your body's sign of abuse
- Finding unexplainable bruises, blacking out, compromising your values.
- Planning your schedule around going out and drinking so that you can wake up at noon or 1pm instead of earlier
- Missing class or pushing aside other obligations because of drinking habits

### Remember that Alcohol is a Depressant

A weekend or even a night of drinking may leave you feeling unmotivated, depressed or tired for a day or two afterwards.

### Visit the Tang Center for Information on Alcohol Abuse.

**Appointments** (M-F 8-4:45): 642-2000  
**Counseling and Psychological Services** (M-F 8-4:30PM): 642-9494  
**After Hours Assistance** (referrals only): 643-7197  
**Self-Care Resource Center- Second floor of Tang** (M-F 11-4): 642-7202  
[www.uhs.berkeley.edu](http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu)

**Reminder:** All students can use Tang even if they waived out of Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP).

### Your Health Worker is:

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**Office Hours: No OH next week due to finals!**

**Health Tip Archive:**  
<http://ihouse.berkeley.edu/l/residents/healthtips.html>