

HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

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April is Alcohol Awareness Month

You may have heard that regular light to moderate drinking can be good for the heart. With heavy or at-risk drinking, however, any potential benefits are outweighed by greater risks, including:

Injuries. Drinking too much increases your chances of being injured or even killed. Alcohol is a factor, for example, in about 60% of fatal burn injuries, drownings, and homicides; 50% of severe trauma injuries and sexual assaults; and 40% of fatal motor vehicle crashes, suicides, and fatal falls.

Health problems. People who drink heavily have a greater risk of liver disease, heart disease, sleep disorders, depression, stroke, bleeding from the stomach, sexually transmitted infections from unsafe sex, and several types of cancer. They may have problems managing diabetes, high blood pressure, and other conditions.

Birth defects. Drinking during pregnancy can cause brain damage and other serious problems in the baby. Because it is not yet known whether any amount of alcohol is safe for a developing baby, women who are pregnant or may become pregnant should not drink.

Alcohol use disorders. An alcohol use disorder is a medical condition that doctors can diagnose when a patient's drinking causes distress or harm. In the United States, about 17 million people have an

Beyond these physical and mental health risks, frequent heavy drinking is also linked with personal problems, including losing a driver's license and relationship troubles.

If you choose to drink, have only a moderate (limited) amount. This means:

- No more than 1 drink a day for women
- No more than 2 drinks a day for men

Different types of beer, wine, and liquor have different amounts of alcohol. In general, 1 drink is equal to a:

- Bottle of beer (12 ounces)
- Glass of wine (5 ounces)
- Shot of liquor (1.5 ounces)

Drinking is a problem if it causes trouble with:

- Your relationships
- School or work
- How you think and feel

If you have a drinking problem, it's important to see a doctor right away. You can improve your health by drinking less or not drinking at all.

National Institute for Health



What does one drink look like?



Think before you drink.



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MOVE MORE MONTH

Walking toward a healthier you!

There are countless ways you can get active, but walking has the lowest dropout rate of them all! It's the simplest positive change you can make to improve your heart health.

Research has shown that walking at least 30 minutes a day can help you:

- Reduce your risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- Improve your blood pressure, blood sugar levels and blood lipid profile
- Maintain your body weight and lower the risk of obesity
- Enhance your mental well-being
- Reduce your risk of osteoporosis
- Reduce your risk of breast and colon cancer
- Reduce your risk of non-insulin dependent (type 2) diabetes

There really are so many benefits for such a simple activity!

American Heart Association recommends that adults get 150 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity each week. **Even short 10 minute activity sessions can be added up over the week to reach this goal.** If you would benefit from lowering your blood pressure or cholesterol, aim for 40 minute sessions of moderate to vigorous activity 3 to 4 times a week. You could do this by walking 2 miles briskly (about 4 miles/hr). If that's too fast, choose a more comfortable pace.

Sole-mate: A friend by your side

The thought of being alone can be enough to keep some people from walking. The best way to solve this is by finding a friend to walk with. You can plan walking paths that are convenient for both of you, or map out routes that take you places you've never been before. It's a great way to exercise and spend time with friends!



American Heart Association



Moving does the body good!

