

APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH



Drinking too much alcohol increases people's risk of injury, violence, drowning, liver disease, and some types of cancer. This April during Alcohol Awareness Month, the Louisiana State Board of Nursing encourages you to educate yourself and your loved ones about the dangers of drinking too much.

In Louisiana alone, there were 3,379 drunk-driving accidents within the past year, and 33.3% of all traffic deaths in the state were due to drunk driving. To spread the word and prevent alcohol abuse, Louisiana State Board of Nursing is joining other organizations across the country to honor Alcohol Awareness Month.

DID YOU KNOW?

“One drink” is a 12-ounce bottle of beer, or a 5-ounce glass of wine, or a 1.5 ounce shot of liquor (80 proof)?

Alcohol affects women differently than men? Pound for pound, men carry more water than women, so the alcohol a woman drinks is not as diluted (i.e., it affects women more).



BUT, WHAT ARE THE RISKS? In addition to the dangers of drinking and driving, alcohol consumption presents other risks . . .

Medication interactions: Be careful! Alcohol can reduce the effect of medication, or interact with numerous medications, or increase sedative effects of medications. It can be a dangerous risk.



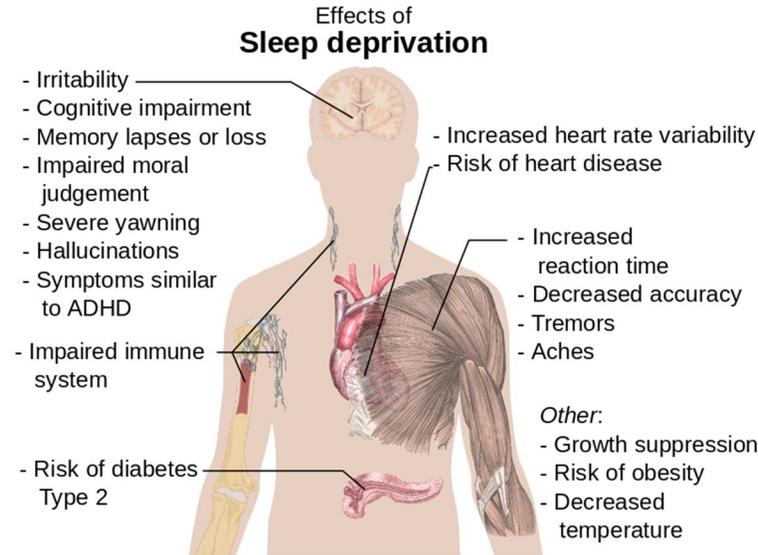
Weight gain: Alcohol supplies calories but few nutrients. To lose one pound per week, you need to consume 500 fewer calories a day than your body burns. If you want to see an estimate of how many calories you are consuming per week in alcohol, go to the **Alcohol Calorie Calculator** at <http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/CalorieCalculator.asp>

Breast cancer: Research suggest that at little as one drink per day can slightly raise the risk of breast cancer in some women, especially those who are postmenopausal or have a family history of breast cancer.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: Drinking by a pregnant woman can harm her unborn baby and may cause birth defects.

Disease: Heavy drinking can result in liver disease, brain disease, heart disease and cancers of the breast, digestive tract, head, and neck.

Loss of Sleep: Alcohol may help you fall asleep, but it prevents you from reaching the deeper, restorative, phases of sleep. In turn, sleep deprivation can cause many health problems.



WHAT CAN I DO?

If you are drinking too much, you can improve your health by cutting back or quitting. Here are some strategies to help you cut back or stop drinking:

- Limit your drinking to no more than 1 drink a day for women or 2 drinks a day for men.
- Keep track of how much you drink.
- Choose a day each week when you will not drink.
- Don't drink when you are upset.
- Avoid places where people drink a lot.
- Make a list of reasons not to drink.

Information adapted from:

Mothers against Drunk Driving (2015). *Louisiana*. Retrieved from <http://www.madd.org/drunk-driving/state-stats/Louisiana.html>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2015). *Alcohol Awareness Month*. Retrieved from <http://healthfinder.gov/NHO/AprilToolkit.aspx#top-of-page>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health (2008). *Alcohol: A Women's Health Issue*. Retrieved from http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochurewomen/Woman_English.pdf

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health (n.d.). *Rethinking Drinking: Alcohol and Your Health*. Retrieved from <http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/CalorieCalculator.asp>