



Counting The Costs

- Alcohol kills more than 100,000 people every year.
- Drunk driving accidents kill about 15,000 and injure over 300,000 people every year.
- Alcohol use is involved in:
 - Half of murders, accidental deaths, and suicides.
 - A third of drowning, boating, and aviation deaths.
 - Half of all crimes.
- The economic cost of alcohol abuse is about \$150 billion per year, only 45% of which is paid by the abusers themselves.



High Risk Drinking

It's possible to binge on food, spending, gambling, or drugs. All are destructive. Binge drinking, though, often masquerades as a game or rite of passage. When someone drinks large amounts of alcohol in a short time, specifically to get drunk, it's a binge and it's a potentially deadly game.

Nearly 60% of students say that alcohol is not important at a party. No surprise—Drinkers cause big problems for others. Non-drinkers experience insults and arguments, vandalism, assaults, and unwanted sexual advances because of others' heavy drinking. No wonder the majority thinks getting drunk is *not cool!*

Up to 30,000 young people a year need medical treatment for acute alcohol poisoning. Binge drinkers miss classes, fall behind in their schoolwork, and have lower grades.

Binge drinking dramatically increases the chances of sexual assault. Two out of three college men who sexually assaulted women were drunk, and 55% of the victims were also drunk. Binge drinking causes crazy behavior, and it makes people less able to protect themselves.

Binge Drinking Data

www.intheknowzone.com/binge/stats/

If your goal is to get drunk, you need to take a hard look at your life. High-risk, binge drinking is not "normal" in high school, in college, or in life after college. Binge drinking is not a rite of passage; it is not a funny phase; and it is not cool.

For More Information

Go to www.intheknowzone.com for an extension of this pamphlet.

Increase your knowledge using the information, statistics, images, and links.

Test your understanding with a quick quiz.



Don't stay in the dark.
Get In the Know!

Binge Drinking

drowning in alcohol



in the know

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What is "binge drinking"?

Binge drinking is defined as five standard drinks in a row for men and four for women. A "standard drink" is 12 grams of pure ethanol, which equals:

- 12 ounces of beer or wine cooler.
- 8 ounces of malt liquor.
- 5 ounces of wine.
- 1 1/2 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits (whiskey, etc.)

Alcohol affects women more quickly than men, adjusting for weight, because men's bodies have a greater percentage of water by volume.

When is someone really "drunk"?

There are different ways to measure if a person is drunk. The noticeable signs include:

- Slurred, too-loud, or too-fast speech.
- Weakened balance.
- Loose muscle tone.
- Staggering walk or inability to walk.
- Glossy appearance to eyes.
- Skin cool to the touch.
- Slower pupil response.
- Loss of consciousness.



From Legally Drunk to Literally Dead

The legal system assesses drunkenness by measuring Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC,) the percentage of alcohol in the blood as someone drinks. In most states, a BAC of .10% is considered legally drunk. In some states, the limit is .08%. If you are under 21 *any* alcohol in your system is against the law.

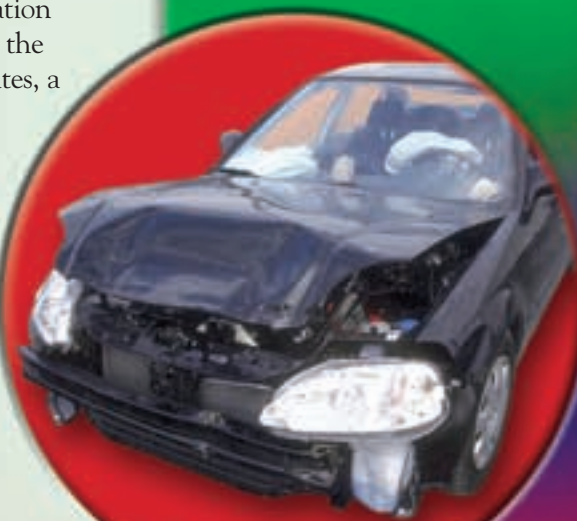
Three drinks in one hour for a 160-pound person can put that drinker over the legal limit for driving a car. Four or five drinks would make a person very drunk! The faster someone drinks, the more dangerous drinking becomes.

BAC levels of .40% or higher cause death. Someone gulping beer from 16-20 ounce cups could easily and quickly drink himself to death.

Blood Alcohol Concentration
www.intheknowzone.com/binge/bac/

Binge Drinking Dangers

Heavy, fast drinking is terribly risky, because it can spiral out of control. Hangover is a given: headache, thirst, nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light and noise, blurry vision, shakiness, and exhaustion. Alcohol poisoning and respiratory arrest, which can progress to coma or death, are major risks. Injuries or death from falls, drowning, and other accidents are common. Bingers are more likely to have unsafe sex, leading to pregnancy and STDs. Being drunk costs someone his reasoning ability, movement control, and reaction speed, making him *deadly behind the wheel of a car.*



Anything else?

Serious health effects are not the only impacts of binge drinking. Bingers have more, and more severe, hangovers. Not only do bingers miss school and work, but one night of heavy drinking can limit your mental ability for up to 30 days!

Is binge drinking the same as alcoholism?

Binge drinking is not alcoholism, but binge drinkers are more likely to become alcoholics. The disease of alcoholism worsens over time until alcoholics crave alcohol and can't limit their drinking. They continue to drink in spite of the real problems it causes in their lives. Alcoholics need more and more alcohol to feel the same effect. It's a true, physical addiction, complete with painful withdrawal symptoms. *And it can happen to anyone.*

Alcoholism Information

www.intheknowzone.com/alcohol/disease/

What are the long-term health consequences of using alcohol?

Heavy or long-term drinking causes irreversible, often fatal damage to the body. Effects include:

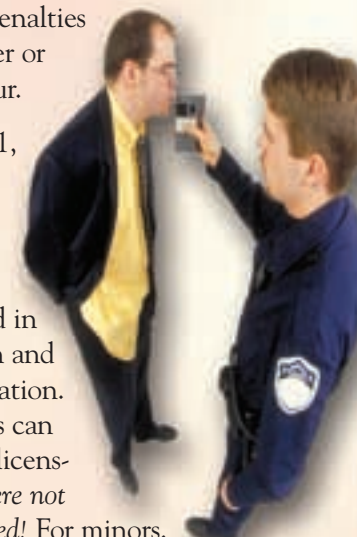
- Liver diseases.
- Heart disease and stroke.
- Brain cell death.
- Cancer of the mouth, pharynx, esophagus, breast, pancreas, liver, colon, and rectum.
- Limited normal growth in young people.
- Damage to eyes and skin.
- Malnutrition and gastric illnesses.
- Sexual problems in men and women.

Women who are—or *could be*—pregnant must not drink any alcohol! Alcohol use during pregnancy is the #1 cause of nonhereditary mental retardation and causes *lifelong* hyperactive behavior and learning disabilities.

Legal consequences of drinking alcohol:

It is illegal for anyone to drive under the influence of alcohol. Penalties are severe, whether or not accidents occur.

If you are under 21, it is illegal to buy, possess, or drink alcohol. Penalties for these crimes include being held in juvenile detention and being put on probation. Underage drinkers can lose their driver's licenses—even if they were not driving when arrested! For minors, alcohol rehabilitation is usually mandatory.



Alcohol and the Law

www.intheknowzone.com/alcohol/law/

drinking damage