

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE DIE EACH YEAR FROM ACUTE ALCOHOL INTOXICATION, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS ALCOHOL POISONING OR ALCOHOL OVERDOSE.

ALCOHOL POISONING OR ALCOHOL OVERDOSE IS CAUSED BY DRINKING TOO MUCH ALCOHOL TOO FAST. IT OFTEN OCCURS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES OR WHEREVER HEAVY DRINKING TAKES PLACE.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A FRIEND, GET HELP, CALL 911.

U ALSO NEED 2 KNOW


- Purchase and public possession of alcohol by persons under the age of 21 is illegal in all 50 states.
- Standard servings of beer (12 oz.), wine (5 oz.) and distilled spirits (1.5 oz, 80 proof) all contain the same amount of alcohol.
- Any net health benefits associated with alcohol consumption don't begin until middle age and occur only with moderate drinking (defined by the federal government as not more than two drinks per day for men and not more than one for women).
- Although certain groups of people are at higher risk for alcoholism, anyone who drinks can develop the disease.
- The most significant predictors of alcohol problems are family history and the quantity and frequency of an individual's drinking.
- Some people should not drink alcoholic beverages at all, including women who are trying to conceive or who are pregnant; individuals using prescription and over-the-counter medications; individuals who plan to drive or take part in activities that require attention or skill; and individuals of any age who cannot restrict their drinking to moderate levels.

WHAT IS NCADD?

Founded in 1944 by Marty Mann, the first woman to recover from alcoholism in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) and its National Network of Affiliates is dedicated to increasing awareness and reducing the stigma often associated with the disease of alcoholism and drug dependence and advocates for the elimination of discrimination in terms of access to appropriate treatment within the health care system and in the workplace. NCADD Affiliates provide community education, prevention, information/referral, intervention, training, recovery support and advocacy services. Last year, over 713,000 people called NCADD and our National Network of Affiliates seeking help for themselves, a friend or a family member!

MISSION STATEMENT

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) and its Affiliate Network is a voluntary health organization dedicated to fighting the Nation's #1 health problem – alcoholism, drug addiction and the devastating consequences of alcohol and other drugs on individuals, families and communities.

 **NCADD**
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM
AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.
ncadd.org

**DRINKING
TOO MUCH
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ACUTE ALCOHOL INTOXICATION

If people knew more about alcohol poisoning, it could be avoided.

Alcohol poisoning, like other drug overdoses, can occur after the ingestion of a large amount of any alcoholic beverage, including beer, wine or distilled spirits (so-called “hard liquor”). But inexperienced drinkers, or those sensitive to alcohol, may become acutely intoxicated and suffer serious consequences after drinking smaller amounts. Because of differences in body chemistry, women can overdose after drinking lesser amounts than men.

Here’s what happens. Alcohol (a depressant drug), once ingested, works to slow down some of the body’s functions including heart rate, blood pressure, and breathing. When the vital centers have been depressed enough by alcohol, unconsciousness occurs. Further, the amount of alcohol that it takes to produce unconsciousness is dangerously close to a fatal dose. People who survive alcohol poisoning sometimes suffer irreversible brain damage.

Many students are surprised to learn that death can occur from acute intoxication. Most think the worst that can happen is they’ll pass out and have a hang-over the next day.

Knowing the signs and symptoms of acute alcohol intoxication and the proper action to take can help you avoid a tragedy.

A DEAD GIVEAWAY

Binge drinking (drinking five or more drinks in two hours for men and four drinks or more for women) is a common phenomenon on college campuses. As a result, you may come into contact with a person who is experiencing a life-threatening acute alcohol intoxication episode.

But how can you tell if someone is about to become a victim of alcohol poisoning? And if they are, what can you do to help?

ALCOHOL POISONING:

A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Signs and Symptoms

- **Passed out, unconscious or semiconscious.**
- **Slow respirations (breaths) of eight or less per minute, or lapses between respirations of more than eight seconds.**
- **Cold, clammy, pale, or bluish skin.**
- **Vomiting is a sign of alcohol poisoning and can cause choking, asphyxiation and death.**
- **In the event of alcohol poisoning, these signs and symptoms will most likely be accompanied by a strong odor of alcohol.**
- **While these are obvious signs of alcohol poisoning, the list is certainly not all inclusive.**

Appropriate Action: Get Help

- **If you encounter a person who exhibits one or more of the signs and symptoms, do what you would do in any medical emergency: Call 911 immediately.**
- **While waiting for 911 emergency transport, gently turn the intoxicated person on his/her side and maintain that position by placing a pillow in the small of the person’s back. This is important to prevent aspiration (choking) should the person vomit. Stay with the person until medical help arrives.**

Sleeping It Off?

A more difficult situation occurs when an intoxicated person appears to be “sleeping it off.” It is important to understand that even though a person may be semi-conscious, alcohol already in the stomach will continue to enter the bloodstream and circulate throughout the body. The person’s life still may be in danger.

If you should encounter such a situation, place the person on his/her side, help them maintain that position, and watch them closely for signs of alcohol poisoning. If any signs appear, call 911.

If you are having difficulty in determining whether an individual is acutely intoxicated, contact a health professional immediately – you cannot afford to guess.

Hundreds of people die each year from acute alcohol intoxication, more commonly known as alcohol poisoning or alcohol overdose. Caused by drinking too much alcohol too fast, it often occurs on college campuses or wherever heavy drinking takes place.