

April



National Health Observances



Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Alcohol Awareness Month

Sponsor: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
(<http://samhsa.gov/>)

Alcohol Awareness Month is an opportunity to raise awareness of alcohol abuse and encourage people to make healthy, safe choices.

Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may have a problem with alcohol:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?
- Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hangover after drinking?

Source: How to Cut Down on Your Drinking
(<http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/handout.htm>)

Strategies to Cut Back or Quit Drinking

There are many strategies you can try to cut back or quit drinking. To get started:

- Keep track of your drinking and set a drinking limit.
- Try to avoid places where heavy drinking occurs.
- Ask for help from a doctor, family, or friends.
- If you keep alcohol in your home, keep only a limited supply.

Get the Word Out

Sample Media and/or Newsletter or Listserv Announcement

Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or press release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.

Drinking too much alcohol can lead to health problems, including alcohol poisoning, hangovers, and an increased risk of heart disease. This April, during Alcohol Awareness Month, **[your organization]** encourages you to take this time to educate yourself and your loved ones about the dangers of alcohol abuse. In **[enter state]** alone, there have been **[fill in statistics]** drunk driving accidents within the past year. To spread the word

and prevent alcohol abuse, **[your organization]** is joining other organizations across the country to honor Alcohol Awareness Month to prevent alcohol abuse in our community.

If you are drinking too much, you can improve your health by cutting back or quitting. Keep track of how much you drink, avoid places where overdrinking occurs, and find new ways to deal with stress. If you are concerned about someone else's drinking, offer to help.




- Add details about your local activities.
- Include quote from your organization.



For more information, visit **[insert your organization information]**.

Is your organization on Twitter? Send tweets.

Sample tweets: Tips to Prevent Alcohol Abuse

The messages below are sample tweets. To send them via Twitter, click on the URL link provided after the "Tweet this message" phrase. Or, copy the message and paste it to your Twitter Stream and click post.

- For health & wellness, drink alcohol in moderation: meaning no more than 1 drink/day for women; 2 drinks/day for men: <http://1.usa.gov/iMjHj>
[Tweet this message:
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/iMjHj&text=For+health+%26+wellness,+drink+alcohol+in+moderation:+meaning+no+more+than+1+drink/day+for+women:+2+drinks/day+for+men.> 
- Did you know that "one drink" equals: 5oz. of wine, a 12oz. bottle of beer, OR a 1.5oz. shot? <http://1.usa.gov/mAns0w> [Tweet this message:
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/mAns0w&text=Did+you+know+that+'one+drink'+equals:+5oz.+of+wine,+a+12oz.+bottle+of+beer,+OR+a+1.5oz.+shot?> 
- Health Tip: When trying to control your alcohol intake, take a day off. Choose one day a week to abstain from alcohol. [Tweet this message:
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/k2m8bo&text=Health+Tip:+When+trying+to+control+your+alcohol+intake,+take+a+day+off.+Choose+one+day+a+week+to+abstain+from+alcohol.> 

- Have some questions about alcohol? You're not alone. @CDC_ehealth shares their answers: <http://1.usa.gov/l5QQv5>. [Tweet this message: http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/l5QQv5&text=Have+some+questions+about+alcohol?+You+are+not+alone.+@CDC_ehealth+shares+their+answers. 
- FREE pub from NIAAA: Alcohol—A Women's Health Issue: <http://1.usa.gov/ma8wgR>. [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/ma8wgR&text=FREE+pub+from+NIAAA:+Alcohol--A+Women's+Health+Issue>: 

Send e-cards

- CDC: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (<http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/message/message.asp?cardid=55&category=172>)
- View More E-cards (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/ecards/cards.aspx?jsript=1>)

Post a Web Badge

Add this free Web badge (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nhoBadges.aspx#apr>) to your Web site, blog, or social networking profile to show your support for Alcohol Awareness Month.

Get Involved

Take action to raise awareness of alcohol abuse.

1. Partner with a local high school or youth organization to host an event about alcohol abuse prevention.
2. Host an alcohol-free community block party to show how much fun can be had without drinking. Invite local restaurants and a local radio station to provide free food and music.
3. On April 7, National Alcohol Screening Day, partner with a local health clinic to offer free or discounted screenings for alcohol abuse.
4. Partner with your local police station and host a Family Information Night. Share free information on preventing alcohol abuse and provide demonstrations, such as using drinking goggles to see what it's like to be impaired.

5. Post information on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, the library, and post office.



Adapted from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (<http://samhsa.gov/>) at ncadi-info@samhsa.hhs.gov for more information and materials.

Related Tools on healthfinder.gov

- Alcohol Use: Conversation Starters (<http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTool.aspx?toolId=37>)
- Drink Alcohol Only in Moderation (<http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=16>)
- Get Your Teen Screened for Depression (<http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=85&cnt=1&areaId=1&TopicContentId=539>)
- Manage Stress (<http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=45>)
- Talk With Your Doctor About Depression (<http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=33>)
- Talk to Your Kids About Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs (<http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=65>)

Personal Health Tools

- Alcohol-Related Disease Impact Software (<http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/CocktailCalculator.asp>)
- Alcohol Self-Awareness Quiz (<http://www.ncadd.org/facts/youth1.html>) 
- Alcohol Spending Calculator (<http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/AlcoholSpendingCalculator.asp>)
- Alcohol Use Test (<http://getfit.samhsa.gov/Alcohol/TestsAlcoholUseTest.aspx>)
- Drink Size Calculator (<http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/DrinkSizeCalculator.asp>)
- How Are Alcohol and Drugs Affecting Your Life? Self-Test For Teenagers (<http://www.ncadd.org/facts/youth1.html>) 

More Information (Health A-Z)

- Alcohol Abuse
(<http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=1270>)

Resources

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
(<http://samhsa.gov/>)
Alcohol Awareness Month Sponsor
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Personal Frequently Asked Questions: Alcohol and Public Health (<http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/faqs.htm>)
- Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Too Smart To Start
(<http://www.toosmartostart.samhsa.gov/>)
- Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, Native Americans/Alaska Natives and Alcoholism
(<http://www.womenshealth.gov/minority/americanindian/alcoholism.cfm>)
- The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, NCADD Affiliates
(<http://www.ncadd.org/affiliates/affil.html>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, College Drinking Prevention (<http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Family History of Alcohol: Are You At Risk?
(<http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/FamilyHistory/famhist.htm>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, FAQ's on Alcohol (<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/FAQs/General-English/>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Tools (<http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/Tools.asp>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Publications and Resources
(<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/Publications/PamphletsBrochuresPosters/English/default.htm>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging, Alcohol Use in Older People (<http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/alcohol.htm>)
- The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Community Education
(<http://www.drugfree.org/community-education>)

Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize co-workers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/>) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health promotion event.

Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials. (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit).

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure they are available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.
- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.
- Send a press release.
- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.

- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, the library, post office, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.

On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.


Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.

Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic e-mail alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer e-mail alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event, remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at healthfinder.gov. You can contact us at info@nhic.org or send us a tweet @healthfinder (<http://twitter.com/Healthfinder>) .



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