

Females are generally more affected by alcohol just prior to menstruation.

Also Females taking birth control pills or medications containing estrogen may remain intoxicated longer than those who do not, due to the liver's function of metabolizing both.

OTHER DRUGS - Prescription, over-the-counter, illicit and unrecognized drugs all have potential reactions with alcohol. One should be aware of the additive and synergistic effects when these drugs are mixed with alcohol

(Adapted from McKinley)

Some Tips

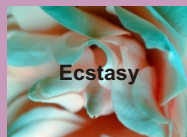
1. Do not drink and drive. Drinking on an empty stomach will also get you drunk much faster, and handling your vehicle riskier. Do not endanger your and your friends' lives. After all it is also illegal!
2. If you do drink, do not drive. Get a lift with someone who is sober, and if there really is no transport do get a taxi back home
3. Likewise do not get a ride with someone who is drunk.
4. Know your limits. Not everyone can consume the same quantity of alcohol.
5. If on medication remember that these do not mix with alcohol.
6. If you, a friend or a family member have an alcohol problem, please do seek help. It is never too late to get your life back together! Our helpline is available 24/7.

For more information (and material) regarding substance misuse, as well as preventive services offered to the general public, please call our Prevention Team on:

21 244 226 or

e-mail on: prevention@waldonet.net.mt

Some of the informative postcards and leaflets recently published



Here are some useful Telephone Numbers:

Sedqa

Sedqa Head Office:	21 441 014
Substance Misuse Out-Patient	21 255 096
Drugs Community Team	21 487 697
Alcohol Community Team	21 487 697
Family Team	21 421 193
Primary Prevention Team	21 244 226
Secondary Prevention Team	21 441 215

Other Agencies

Alcoholics Anonymous	21 239264
Appogg	21 226 066
Caritas (Malta)	21 245 358
Gamblers Anonymous	21 233 933
Health Promotion Dept.	21 245 524
Narcotics Anonymous	21 246 478

PAPERCUT



Quick Words



3, Braille Str. St. Venera HMR 11
Foundation For Social Welfare Services
www.sedqa.org.mt

Papercut is a newsletter issued by sedqa's primary prevention team in an intent to generate updated drug and alcohol prevention information for the general public.

For more information check out our website:

www.sedqa.org.mt

For more information, **sedqa** are @

3, Braille Str. St. Venera HMR 11

Tel: 21 441 014

Or

Primary Prevention Team

Tel: 21 244 226

However, this is not the whole story. In fact, a person's environment influences whether a person with a genetic risk for alcoholism ever develops the problem. This includes where and how he or she lives, family, friends, and culture; peer pressure; and even how easy it is to get alcohol.

Some Statistics

- Almost half of Americans aged 12 or older reported being current drinkers of alcohol in a 2001 survey (48.3 percent).

- Approximately one fifth (20.5 percent) of persons aged 12 or older participated in binge drinking at least once in the 30 days prior to the survey.

- Heavy drinking was reported by 5.7 percent of the population aged 12 or older, or 12.9 million people. These 2001 estimates are similar to the 2000 estimates.

- For people aged 21 to 25 and those aged 26 to 34, the rates of current alcohol use in 2001 were 64.3 and 59.9 percent, respectively. The prevalence of alcohol use was slightly lower for persons in their 40s.

- The highest prevalence of both binge and heavy drinking in 2001 was for young adults aged 18 to 25, with the peak rate occurring at age 21.

- Heavy alcohol use was reported by 13.6 percent of persons aged 18 to 25, and by 17.8 percent of persons aged 21. Binge and heavy drinking were relatively rare among people aged 65 or older, with reported rates of 5.8 and 1.4 percent, respectively.

- Malta stands at the top of the list with respect to youth consumption of alcohol in Europe. (Espad '99)

Sedqa helpline 151

Alcohol Consumption: Bio-Psychosocial Effects

- Alcohol finds its way into the blood stream, hence increasing blood alcohol concentration (BAC).

- When the level of alcohol in the blood is high, it can result in impairments in eye movement, visual perception, reaction times and judgements to adjust to changing conditions

Other Symptoms may include

-Family or social problems

-Change in drinking capacity, once high, starts dropping (later indication of problem drinking).

-Blackouts (not recalling the drinking episode).

-Increased absenteeism and lateness (job or classes).

-Academic or job difficulties related to drinking.

-More susceptibility to accidents and illness.

-Marked changes in behaviour or personality when drinking.

Why different people consuming the same amount react differently or why the same person can have different reactions to alcohol on different occasions

SPEED OF DRINKING- The more rapidly the beverage is ingested, the higher the peak blood alcohol concentration (BAC). The liver metabolizes about 1/2 ounce of alcohol per hour.

PRESENCE OF FOOD IN THE STOMACH- Eating while drinking slows down the absorption rate. When alcoholic beverages are taken with a substantial meal, peak BAC may be reduced by as much as 50%.

BODY WEIGHT- The larger person has more blood and therefore requires greater amounts of alcohol to reach a given BAC.

DRINKING HISTORY/TOLERANCE- Increasing amounts of alcohol are needed to result in the physical and behavioral reactions formerly produced at lesser concentrations, if there is a long history of drinking.

ENVIRONMENT- There may be differences in alcohol's effects, depending upon where one drinks (e.g., local bar, with family, hostile environment, etc.).

THE DRINKER'S EXPECTATIONS- Many people become intoxicated on less alcohol merely because they have that expectation before they begin drinking.

GENERAL STATE OF EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH- Many people are more susceptible to the effects of alcohol when extremely tired, have recently been ill, or are under emotional stress and strain. The usual amount of alcohol may result in uncomfortable effects.

SEX DIFFERENCES- Given the same amount of alcohol and proportional body weight, females will generally have

This issue is entirely dedicated to:

Alcohol

"Alcohol dependence," includes four symptoms:

Craving: A strong need, or compulsion, to drink.

Loss of control: The inability to limit one's drinking on any given occasion.

Physical dependence: Withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety, occur when alcohol use is stopped after a period of heavy drinking.

Tolerance: The need to drink greater amounts of alcohol in order to "get high."

People who are not alcoholic sometimes can not understand why an alcoholic can't just "use a little willpower" to stop drinking.

However, alcoholism has little to do with willpower. Alcoholics are in the grip of a powerful "craving," or uncontrollable need for alcohol. This overrides their ability to stop drinking.

Although some people are able to recover from alcoholism without help, the majority of alcoholics need assistance. With treatment and support, many individuals are able to stop drinking and rebuild their lives.

Scientists have found that having an alcoholic family member makes it more likely that if you choose to drink, you too may develop alcoholism.