

Sobriety

Do I Have a Drinking Problem?

If you regularly consume more than two alcoholic beverages per day, it's reasonable to consider whether you might have a drinking problem.

Here are some signs that you might need help:

- Drinking alone
- Hiding your drinking from loved ones
- Drinking despite the harm it causes your relationships
- Regularly drinking more than you intended
- Drinking when it's dangerous to do so
- Routinely using alcohol as a way to relax
- Legal, health, or relationship problems due to drinking alcohol
- Difficulty sleeping unless you have a drink
- Feeling anxious, depressed, or irritable if you go without alcohol longer than usual
- Drinking even when you don't want to drink
- Giving up other activities so you can drink

How Can I Achieve Sobriety?

You are more likely to stop drinking if you get personal & professional help. You should consider telling your loved ones that you're quitting so they can provide emotional support. It can also be helpful to seek out a support group, such as Alcoholics Anonymous. Ask your Counselor or Psychologist about behavioral coping strategies, and ask your Physician if these medicines might help:

- **Disulfiram ("Antabuse"):** This medication changes the way your body processes alcohol so that you become nauseated if you drink. This can be a powerful incentive to stop drinking.
- **Antidepressants:** Depression is very common amongst drinkers, and it can be a particular problem in the early stages of recovery. If this is true for you, you might benefit from a brief round of treatment with an antidepressant medication.

Additional Resources

- **Alcoholics Anonymous:** <http://www.AA.org>
- **NIH:** <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/>
- **CDC:** <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/index.htm>
- **WebMD:** <https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/addiction/what-is-alcohol-abuse#1>

Why is it So Tough to Give Up Alcohol?

Most people who drink too much find it difficult to give up. Reasons vary from person to person, but common obstacles include:

- Physiological Addiction to Alcohol
- Use of Alcohol to Cope with Stress
- Lack of other Stress-Management Resources
- Development of Personal & Social Habits that Include Drinking

Benefits of Sobriety

Although it can be challenging, giving up alcohol comes with many benefits, including:

- Lower risk of life-threatening cancers & liver disease
- Improved mental clarity & emotional wellbeing
- Less volatile relationships with loved ones
- Improved sleep & energy
- More radiant skin & eyes
- Improved financial wellbeing