

The Facts About

BINGE DRINKING



What is Binge Drinking?

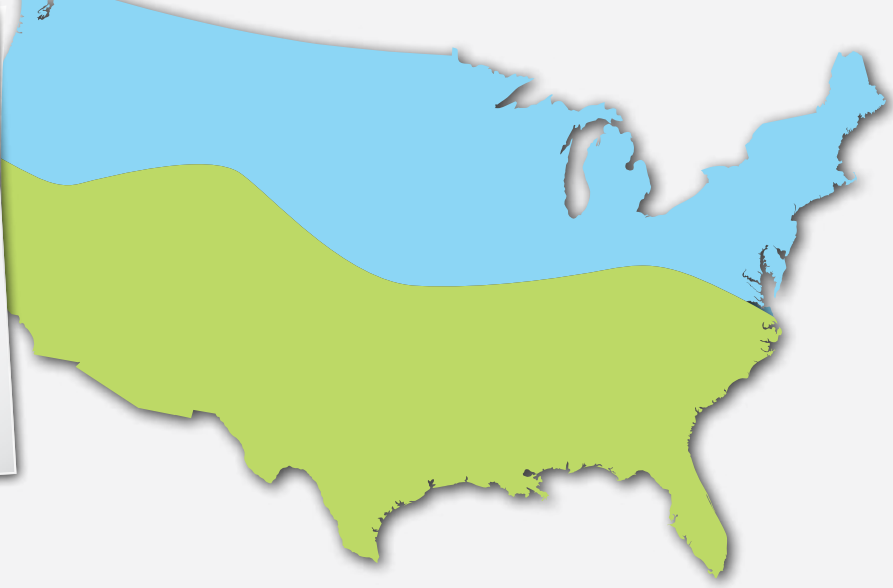
Binge drinking is a type of alcohol consumption that causes as many as 80,000 deaths in the United States each year.

When you think about the meaning of “binge drinking”, images of college students downing alcoholic beverages quickly and excessively usually comes to mind.

Images of loud parties, uninhibited sexual situations, carefree laughter, and kids showing off obnoxiously also come to mind.

Movies and TV often portray binge drinking as a fun time, with wild parties and humorous situations – but this depiction masks the dangerous reality of bingeing.





The Truth about Binge Drinking

Binge drinking is one of the most common patterns of extreme alcohol consumption; statistics show that up to 20 percent of U.S adults binge drink, either occasionally or frequently.

Binge drinking refers to the unhealthy practice of consuming five or more standard alcoholic drinks over a short period of time (5 alcohol drinks for men and 4 drinks for women).

Although most binge drinking episodes involve adults 26 years and older, the practice is generally associated with college students, party goers and adolescents.

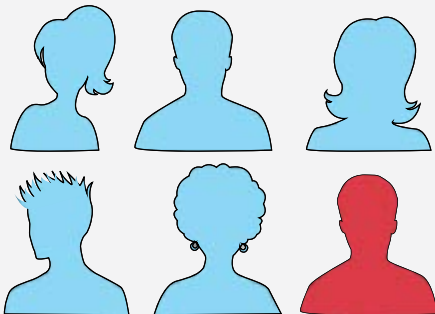
Usually, the person binge drinking does not look at the practice in a negative way; instead, this type of ingesting is often looked at as harmless.

The Truth about Binge Drinking

Binging is typically a social occurrence – perhaps after a long week at the office or particularly tough test. People who binge don't view themselves as an alcoholic, since they aren't drinking every day or because they think they "need" it. Rather, they are out enjoying themselves at the bar and just having a few drinks with friends.

Most people who participate in drinking binges are not alcohol dependent; in fact, they may be social drinkers who just do not see the negatives of this pattern of extreme alcohol consumption. People who binge drink may be well rounded individuals; smart and educated with healthy goals and plans.

Drinking binges often start off innocently enough, spontaneously, impulsively and pretty thoughtlessly. Usually, the negative effects associated with bingeing do not become an issue until that negativity is staring you right in your face.



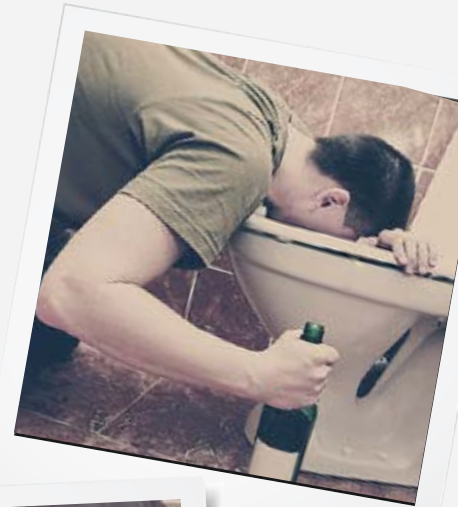
1 IN 6 US ADULTS
binge drink four times a month

What are the Physical Effects of Binge Drinking?

Alcohol, in moderation, can be healthy for your body. But prolonged consumption – whether nightly or in binges – can have a devastating impact on your health. You cannot drink alcohol excessively and not expect there to be negative physical effects because of it.

Alcohol changes your chemical makeup and the pH levels of your body, your body becomes extremely acidic, toxic and exceedingly susceptible to disorders and diseases.

The physical effects of binge drinking are largely dependent on the amount of alcohol consumed and on the person who is consuming it. Nevertheless, if you binge drink, doing so will certainly change your body in drastic and negative ways. Your blood alcohol levels will increase to dangerous levels and remain there for quite some time. You will become dangerously intoxicated, possibly to the point of no control. You may do or say things that are out of character or dangerous and not even remember them in the morning.

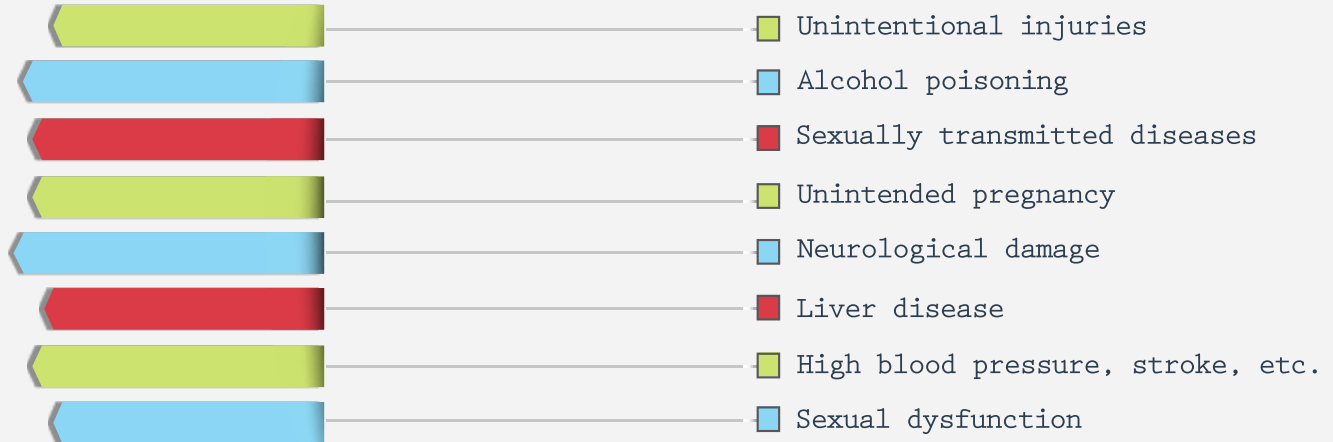


What are the Physical Effects of Binge Drinking?

Some people (mostly those who first start binge drinking), may not be aware of the extreme physical effects that usually follows such behavior.

However, some people are very aware of the risky physical effects of bingeing. Those people actually drink excessively for the sole purpose of getting intoxicated and acting recklessly because they like the somewhat uninhibited feeling that doing so encourages.

If you become intoxicated as a result of bingeing, then you will no longer be yourself, and if you are no longer yourself, then you will not be in control of your own actions.

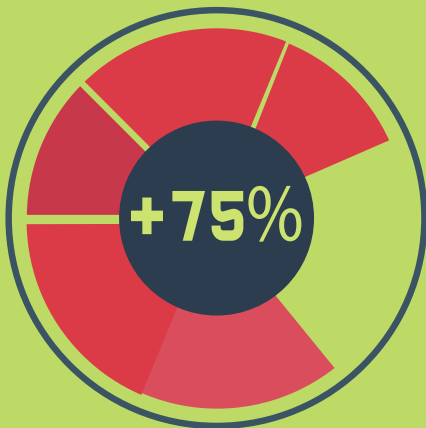


Short Term Physical Effects of Binge Drinking

The physical effects of binge drinking can be dramatic and costly; repeated binging can cost you your health in both short term and long term settings.

The short term effects of binge drinking include symptoms and disorders such as double vision, slurred speech, uncontrollable shaking and trouble breathing.

Also, loss of consciousness, loss of red blood cells, distorted hearing, temporary coma and blackouts to the point where you cannot remember the details of the binge episode are some more of the short term effects.



**OF THE ALCOHOL
CONSUMED BY ADULTS**
is in the form of binge drinking

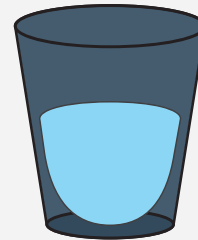
Long Term Damage

The long term physical effects of binge drinking can be quite overwhelming and possibly irreversible. Problems caused by excess drinking usually develop in people who binge drink on a regular basis.

Some of the harsh symptoms and effects of long term consumption includes liver disease, high blood pressure, stroke and nerve damage.

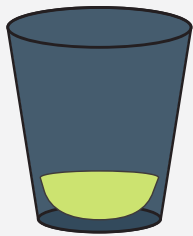
Permanent brain damage, cancer of the throat and mouth, inflammation of the stomach walls, malnutrition, ulcers and sudden death are also some of the long term effects of binge drinking.

Also, an increased risk of alcohol dependency, sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, sudden infant death syndrome and psychological problems are also associated with binge drinking.



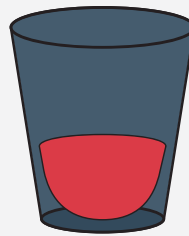
60%

of all injuries, vandalism, and problems with the police reported on college campuses are in frequent (weekly) binge drinkers



24%

of those who start drinking at age 17 or younger develop alcohol dependence



40%

of 13 and 14 year olds reported being 'drunk or stoned' when they experienced first sexual intercourse

What are the Dangers of Binge Drinking?

While the physical dangers of binge drinking is the obvious negative, the dangers of this type of alcohol consumption go way beyond the physical; it is also dangerous to others around you, as well as socially dangerous, financially dangerous and emotionally dangerous:

Danger to Others

With clouded judgment, you are a danger to everyone around you, not just yourself. The increased risks of accidental injuries are much higher when you are in a state of extreme intoxication. Your inhibitions can lower to the point that you may commit crimes and hurt innocent people as a result. You may even act, say and do harmful things that you would never think to do in your healthy state of mind.

Social Dangers of Binge Drinking

Excessive drinking can lead to extreme social and mental disorders. When you become socially impaired, you will no longer be interested in the things and the situations that once brought you joy and happiness. Reduction in school, work or recreation attendance may follow and performance might weaken and lower. Isolation and separation are also some of the social dangers of binge drinking. Extreme drinking may change you to the point where the only thing that makes you happy is binging.

Financial Dangers of Binge Drinking

Binge drinking is an expensive practice. There is the cost of the alcohol itself, and the lowered inhibitions that come with binge drinking can cause you to exceed your budget when you cannot afford to.

Additionally, binge drinking also costs the state and the country. With an increase in the level of accidents and crime, it costs the state in terms of health care, repairing and loss in productivity.

Emotional Dangers of Binge Drinking

Some people use binge drinking as a crutch or as a way to cope with a stressful situation or a negative life event. By using binge drinking as a form therapy, you are not really dealing with the issues behind your behavior. Instead, you are just covering it up like a bandage. Binge drinking can certainly cause emotional damage and can lead to harsher side effects. Feelings of depression and low self-esteem and feeling of worthlessness are some of the emotional dangers of binge drinking.



OF AMERICANS 
have binge drank in the past 30 days

How to Stop Binge Drinking

The ability to stop binge drinking depends on the person and on the situation that he or she is in. It can be a difficult road – but quitting this type of excessive drinking is of the best interest of everyone involved, including yourself, your family and friends and all of society. Below are a few steps to help you on your journey to quitting binge drinking.

1. Admit you have a Problem

When you are trying to rid your life of a bad habit or a stressful situation, you must first admit to having a problem. Admitting that you have a problem is the major step to success. If you do not see bingeing as a negative habit then you will be less likely to stop. You will continue to binge until it becomes so out of control that it robs you of every ounce of decency. Realizing and admitting that bingeing is a toxic practice will make you resent the action enough to encourage you to slow down and eventually stop all together. Owning up to your problem will allow you to forgive and repair yourself.

2. Fear the Consequences

People often run away from their fears. Of course, running away from fearful situations in life is not always a good thing because it is healthy to face your fears and get over them. However, this is an exception. The consequences of binge drinking can be adversely life altering and dangerous. Doing so can cost you your decency and possibly your life. It can cause you to act and do irrational things. If you begin to fear the negatives of excessive drinking, then your mind may subconsciously encourage you to quit.

3. Know your Worth

Being confident in yourself and in your ability to contribute to a situation on your own, without the inclusion of excess drinking will prevent you from starting in the first place. If you are amongst people who are pressuring you to binge, then you need to be strong enough to walk away from those people and the situation all together.



4. Stay Away for Alcohol and Alcohol Encouraging Situations

If you are vulnerable to binge drinking then the easiest way to quit is to stay away from alcohol and certain alcohol encouraging situations altogether. If you are aware of a situation or a party that involves excess drinking, then you will have to make the healthy choice to stay away. Staying away completely may be quite difficult for some people as it may result in relapsing and greater problems.

5. Drink Slowly and Responsibly

Drinking slowly and responsibly will allow you to enjoy the beverage as well as the situation. When you drink responsibly, you will be aware of everything around you and you will be in control of your well-being. Responsible drinking is the ultimate key to avoiding reckless situations associated with excess drinking.

6. Drink Non-alcoholic Beverages

There is a stigma that associates excessive drinking with having a good time. Mainstream media and social situations see unrestrained actions as the only way to have fun, which is certainly not true. You can have just as much fun and maybe even more fun by drinking non-alcoholic drinks, than you would if you were drinking alcohol. When you are in your right state of mind, then you are able to make smarter choices and stay out of danger. So, if you are trying to stop binge drinking and you trust yourself enough to go out in social setting that includes drinking alcohol, then choose to drink non-alcoholic beverages such as sodas, water, teas and slushies.

7. Seek Non-drinking Situations

Seeking non drinking situations such as movie nights, bowling parties, game nights, educational classes and hanging out with non-drinking friends will help you to invite positive practices into your life and take your mind off of the recklessness of binge drinking.

8. Seek Help from Others

For some, giving up binge drinking is as easy as simply never bingeing again, while for others, quitting might be a bit of a challenge. It is a fact that for some people, binge drinking may become more than just occasional bouts of social drinking episodes; it might become uncontrollable and hard to give up. For those who may find it hard to give up the habit on their own, seeking help in the forms of therapy, family involvement, non-drinking friends and a change of scenery might help. It may take a lot of failed attempts, but if you stick to it and continue to seek help then you will eventually quit bingeing.

Final Thoughts

Although the act of binge drinking is often glorified by mainstream media, college life and social situations, there really is nothing positive about the practice of drinking yourself into a stupor. Overindulging in this way is disrupting and can put you in unforgivable circumstances. When you go out with your friends or by yourself, you should not go out for the sole purpose of drinking and getting drunk. Instead, you should go out to have fun and to enjoy the moment and the place. If you happen to have a drink, that is fine. There isn't anything wrong with drinking; it is your ability to drink responsibly that matters.

Admit you have a Problem _____ 

Seek Non-drinking Situations _____ 

Seek Help from Others _____ 

Fear the Consequences _____ 

Drink Non-alcoholic Beverage _____ 

Know your Worth _____ 

Drink slowly & responsibly _____ 