



EAP Navigator

September 2011

Your Success is Our Compass

National Health Observances

September

ADHD Month
Baby Safety Month
Backpack Safely America Month
International Self-Awareness Month
International People Skills Month
College Savings Month
National Preparedness Month
National Child Awareness Month
National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month
Self Improvement Month

Week of September 4 - 10

Suicide Prevention Week

Week of September 18 - 24

National Prostate Cancer Awareness Week

October

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Emotional Wellness Month
Celiac Disease Awareness Month
National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
National Depression Education & Awareness Month

Week of October 3 - 7

Customer Service Week

Week of October 16 - 22

Freedom From Bullies Week

What is EAP?

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a **FREE** and **CONFIDENTIAL** service that can assist you and your eligible family members with **ANY** personal concern, large or small.

1-800-433-2320

www.cascadecenters.com

Take the Alcohol Quiz

Nearly 14 million people in the United States -- 1 in every 13 adults -- abuse alcohol or are alcoholic. How much do you know about alcohol use and abuse? Find out by taking this quiz, based on information from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

1. Alcoholism is a disease with four main symptoms.

- True
 False

2. Children of alcoholics are doomed to repeat their parents' dependence on alcohol.

- True
 False

3. Once an alcoholic has completed treatment for the disease, he or she is considered cured.

- True
 False

4. Two types of medication are available to treat alcoholism.

- True
 False

5. Despite treatment, alcoholics often relapse.

- True
 False

6. As long as you're not an alcoholic, you are safe from problems associated with it.

- True
 False

7. Most alcohol abusers are young adults.

- True
 False

8. Alcoholics must give up drinking entirely to recover from their illness.

- True
 False

9. A moderate amount of alcohol consumption is two drinks a day for a man and one drink a day for a woman.

- True
 False

10. As long as a woman limits the amount of alcohol she consumes, she can drink occasionally when she's pregnant.

- True
 False

Answers on back page

Dispelling Myths About Social Drinking

Enjoying wine, beer or spirits is a common activity in many social situations. Although alcohol can be viewed as a good way to relax and unwind, it's important to note that behavioral influences play an important role in determining how much alcohol a person consumes and its subsequent effect on activities and emotions.

"Alcohol is a social lubricant," explains G. Alan Marlatt, Ph.D., professor of psychology at the University of Washington. "A person's drinking behavior is motivated to a large extent by social anxieties and psychological expectations."

To help gain an understanding of alcohol in social settings, Dr. Marlatt, who has conducted extensive research on social drinking, provides insight into some commonly held beliefs about alcohol consumption.

Myth #1: A person who drinks will be more sociable than a person who doesn't.

Reality #1: Although a drink or two can help an anxious person feel more relaxed, alcohol alone does not make a person more attractive, interesting or witty.

"People have strong beliefs about how

alcohol changes behavior," Dr. Marlatt says. "We've found that people's beliefs about how they appear while drinking differ from the perceptions of others around them."

Dr. Marlatt says, for example, that men may think they're more attractive after having a few drinks. Yet when women are asked about these men, they don't agree.

Myth #2: People who drink can't help how they act.

Reality #2: Alcohol can have physical and emotional effects, but Dr. Marlatt explains that a person's reactions to drinking are equally controlled by psychological perceptions.

In a study by Dr. Marlatt, young male drinkers were given drinks they thought contained alcohol, but, in fact, did not. As the subjects consumed the "alcoholic" drinks, their behavior changed dramatically, becoming more aggressive, loud and flirtatious.

"People have been conditioned to believe they'll react in certain ways if they consume alcohol," Dr. Marlatt said. "It's more about you and where you decide to put yourself that controls how you will act when drinking."

Myth #3: People feel better if they drink.

Reality #3: Although drinking provides a social and behavioral disinhibition which may be experienced as a stimulating effect, it has diminishing effects over time, including slow speech, reduced coordination and depression.

"People unrealistically think of alcohol as a magic elixir," Dr. Marlatt says. "They don't seem to remember the corresponding negative effects that go along with alcohol consumption, such as hangovers and depression."

Staying in control

Being a smart social drinker requires staying in control, setting limits and realizing how your perceptions and surroundings can affect your behavior.

If you're planning to attend an event where you don't know many people, determine beforehand how many drinks you will have. By drinking slowly and being aware of your surroundings, you can stay in control and not feel easily swayed into drinking more than you normally might.

"A good social drinker is knowledgeable about alcohol," Dr. Marlatt says. "You know your limits, you know to eat before you drink and you know that consuming alcohol is not going to change you into a better person."

Answers to Alcohol Quiz

1. True. The four symptoms are craving (a strong need to drink), impaired control (inability to limit drinking), physical dependence (withdrawal symptoms when alcohol use is stopped after heavy drinking) and tolerance (the need for increasing amounts of alcohol to feel the effects).

2. False. Alcoholism tends to run in families, but other risk factors such as the influence of friends and stress levels are involved as well. A child of an alcoholic parent will not automatically develop alcoholism. A person with no family history of alcoholism can become alcohol dependent. Knowing that you are at more risk because alcoholism runs in your family means you can take steps to avoid getting into trouble.

3. False. Although alcoholism is a treatable disease, and medication has also become available to help prevent relapse, a cure has not yet been found. This means that even if an alcoholic has been sober for a long time and has regained health, he or she may relapse and must continue to avoid all alcoholic beverages.

4. True. The first are tranquilizers called benzodiazepines, which are used only during the first few days of treatment to help patients safely withdraw from alcohol.

A second type of medication, such as naltrexone, is used to help people remain sober. When used together with counseling, this medication lessens the craving for alcohol in many people and helps prevent a return to heavy drinking. Another older medication is disulfiram, which discourages drinking by causing nausea, vomiting and other unpleasant physical reactions when alcohol is used.

5. True. It is important to remember that many people relapse once or several times before achieving long-term sobriety. Relapses do not mean that a person has failed or cannot eventually recover from alcoholism. If a relapse occurs, it is important to try to stop drinking again and to get whatever help is needed to abstain from alcohol.

6. False. Even if you're not an alcoholic, abusing alcohol can have negative results, such failure to meet major work, school or family responsibilities because of drinking; alcohol-related legal trouble; automobile crashes due to drinking; and a variety of alcohol-related medical problems. Under some circumstances, problems can result from even moderate drinking -- for example, when driving, during pregnancy or when taking certain medicines.

7. True. Rates of alcohol problems are highest among young adults ages 18 to 29 and lowest among adults age 65 years and older. Overall, more men than women are alcohol-dependent or experience alcohol-related problems.

8. True. Studies show that nearly all alcoholics who try to merely cut down on drinking are unable to do so indefinitely. Instead, cutting out alcohol (that is, abstaining) is nearly always necessary for successful recovery. If you are not alcoholic but have had alcohol-related problems, you may be able to limit the amount you drink.

9. True. One drink equals one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.

10. False. Drinking during pregnancy can cause fetal alcohol syndrome, a birth defect that includes mental retardation, organ abnormalities, hyperactivity and learning and behavioral problems. Moreover, many of these problems last into adulthood. While we don't yet know exactly how much alcohol is required to cause these problems, we do know that they are 100 percent preventable if a woman does not drink at all during pregnancy.