Drinking too much can harm your health. Excessive alcohol use leads to more than 95,000 deaths in the United States each year, shortening the lives of those who died by an average of 29 years. The economic costs of excessive alcohol consumption in 2010 were estimated at $249 billion, or $2.05 a drink.

What is considered a “drink”? U.S. Standard Drink Sizes

- 12 ounces 5% beer
- 8 ounces 7% malt liquor
- 5 ounces 12% wine
- 1.5 ounces 40% (80 proof) distilled spirits
  (examples: gin, rum, vodka, whiskey)

Excessive alcohol use includes:

- **Binge Drinking**
  - For women, 4 or more drinks consumed on an occasion
  - For men, 5 or more drinks consumed on an occasion

- **Heavy Drinking**
  - For women, 8 or more drinks per week
  - For men, 15 or more drinks per week

- **Any alcohol used by pregnant women**

- **Any alcohol used by those under the age of 21 years**

If you choose to drink, do so in moderation:

- **FOR WOMEN**, up to 1 drink a day
- **FOR MEN**, up to 2 drinks a day

**DON’T DRINK AT ALL** if you are under the age of 21, or if you are or may be pregnant, or have health problems that could be made worse by drinking.

NO ONE should begin drinking or drink more frequently based on potential health benefits.
Excessive alcohol use has immediate effects that increase the risk of many harmful health conditions. These are most often the result of binge drinking. Over time, excessive alcohol use can lead to the development of chronic diseases and other serious problems.

**Short-Term Health Risks**

**Injuries**
- Motor vehicle crashes
- Falls
- Drownings
- Burns

**Violence**
- Homicide
- Suicide
- Sexual assault
- Intimate partner violence

**Alcohol poisoning**

**Reproductive health**
- Risky sexual behaviors
- Unintended pregnancy
- Sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV
- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs)

**Long-Term Health Risks**

**Chronic diseases**
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Liver disease
- Digestive problems

**Cancers**
- Breast
- Mouth and throat
- Liver
- Colon and rectum

**Learning and memory problems**
- Dementia
- Poor school performance

**Mental health**
- Depression
- Anxiety

**Social problems**
- Lost productivity
- Family problems
- Unemployment

**Alcohol use disorders**