April

National Health Observances

Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Alcohol Awareness Month

Sponsor: National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (http://www.ncadd.org/)

Drinking too much alcohol increases the risk of health-related problems like injuries, violence, liver disease, and some types of cancer.

The good news? We can all do our part to prevent alcohol abuse.

Make a difference: Spread the word about strategies for preventing alcohol abuse and encourage communities, families, and individuals to get involved.

How can Alcohol Awareness Month make a difference?

We can use this month to raise awareness about alcohol abuse and take action toward a solution – both at home and in the community.

Here are just a few ideas:

- Encourage friends or family members to make small changes, like keeping track of their drinking and setting drinking limits.
- Share tips with parents on talking with their kids about the risks of alcohol use.
- Ask doctors and nurses to talk to their patients about the benefits of drinking alcohol only in moderation.

How can I help spread the word?

We've made it easier for you to make a difference. This toolkit is full of ideas to help you take action today. For example:

- Add information about alcohol abuse to your newsletter.
- Tweet about Alcohol Awareness Month.
- Host a community event where families can learn about local addiction resources.

Get the Word Out

Sample Media and/or Newsletter or Listserv Announcement

Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or press release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.

Drinking too much alcohol increases the risk of health-related problems like injuries, violence, liver disease, and some types of cancer. This April during Alcohol Awareness Month, **[your organization]** encourages you to take this time to educate yourself and your loved ones about the dangers of drinking too much.

In **[enter state]** alone, there have been **[fill in statistics]** drunk driving accidents within the past year. To spread the word and prevent alcohol abuse, **[your organization]** is joining other organizations across the country to honor Alcohol Awareness Month and prevent alcohol abuse in our community.

If you are drinking too much, you can improve your health by cutting back or quitting. Here are some strategies to help you cut back or stop drinking:

- Limit your drinking to no more than 1 drink a day for women and no more than 2 drinks a day for men.
- Keep track of how much you drink.
- Don't drink when you are upset.
- Avoid places where people drink too much.
- Make a list of reasons not to drink.

If you are concerned about someone else's drinking, offer to help.

- **[Add details about your local activities.]**
- **[Include quote from your organization.]**

For more information, visit **[insert your organization information]**.

Is your organization on Twitter? Send tweets.

The messages below are sample tweets. To send them via Twitter, click on the URL link provided after the "Tweet this message" phrase. Or, copy the message and paste it to your Twitter stream and click post.

- Drink alcohol only in moderation: no more than 1 drink a day for women and no more than 2 drinks a day for men: http://1.usa.gov/Z6m3mw
    - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/0icXo

- Did you know that "1 drink" equals: 5oz. of wine, a 12oz. bottle of beer, OR a 1.5oz. shot? http://1.usa.gov/Z6m3mw
    - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/0564d

- Have some questions about alcohol? You are not alone. @CDC_ehealth shares their answers: http://1.usa.gov/l5QQv5
    - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/k1cn7

- Check out this free publication – Alcohol a Women's Health Issue: http://1.usa.gov/Y0JuMG
    - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/Bymb6

- Worried about your drinking habits? Take a day off from drinking. Learn more about drinking in moderation: http://1.usa.gov/10ru9uK
    - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/Fq4oA

- Drinking less alcohol could help you lose weight and save money. Learn more about how drinking less can help you: http://1.usa.gov/ZGWQnq
    - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/2nNho

- Go for a walk or catch up with an old friend instead of drinking alcohol. Learn more: http://1.usa.gov/VisRQL
    - Tweet this message: http://clicktotweet.com/IaKc5

Send e-cards

- CDC: Alcohol and Pregnancy (http://t.cdc.gov/ecards/message.aspx?cardid=476)
- CDC: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (http://t.cdc.gov/ecards/message.aspx?cardid=55)
- CDC: Prevent Binge Drinking (http://t.cdc.gov/ecards/message.aspx?cardid=514&category=119)

Post a Web Badge

Add this free Web badge (http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nhoBadges.aspx#april) to your Web site, blog, or social networking profile to show your support for Alcohol Awareness Month.

Get Involved

Take action to raise awareness of alcohol abuse.

1. Partner with a local high school or youth organization to host an event about alcohol abuse prevention.
2. Host an alcohol-free community block party to show how much fun can be had without drinking. Invite local restaurants and a local radio station to provide free food and music.
3. On April 11, National Alcohol Screening Day, partner with a local health clinic to offer free or low-cost screenings for alcohol abuse.
4. Partner with your local police station and host a Family Information Night. Share free information on preventing alcohol abuse and provide demonstrations. For example, use drinking goggles to show how drinking too much can affect vision.
5. Post information on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, libraries, and post offices.

Adapted from the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.

(http://www.ncadd.org/)

For more information and materials, contact:

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (http://samhsa.gov/) at ncadi-info@samhsa.hhs.gov
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/

Share These Tools

Health Topics

- Drink Alcohol Only in Moderation (http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/heart-health/drink-alcohol-only-in-moderation)
- Manage Stress (http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/health-conditions-and-diseases/heart-health/manage-stress)
- Talk with Your Doctor about Depression (http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/doctor-visits/screening-tests/talk-with-your-doctor-about-depression)
- Talk to Your Kids About Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs (http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/parenting/healthy-communication-and-relationships/talk-to-your-kids-about-tobacco-alcohol-and-drugs)

Personal Health Tools

- Alcohol Self-Awareness Quiz (http://www.checkyourself.com/showquiz.aspx?id=1)
- Alcohol Spending Calculator (http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/AlcoholSpendingCalculator.asp)
- Alcohol Use: Conversation starters (http://healthfinder.gov/HealthTopics/Category/everyday-healthy-living/mental-health-and-relationship/alcohol-use-conversation-starters)
- Cocktail Content Calculator (http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/CocktailCalculator.asp)
- Drink Size Calculator (http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/DrinkSizeCalculator.asp)

More Information (Related Resources)

- Alcohol Abuse (http://www.healthfinder.gov/FindServices/SearchContext.aspx?topic=1270)

Find More Information

- Alcohol Awareness Month (http://www.ncadd.org/index.php/programs-a-services/alcohol-awareness-month) National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc., Alcohol Awareness Month Sponsor
- Alcohol & Health (http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health) National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- Alcohol-Related Brochures and Fact Sheets (http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/brochures-and-fact-sheets) National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- Alcohol and Public Health: Frequently Asked Questions (http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/faqs.htm) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Alcohol and Your Health: Tools (http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/ToolsResources/Tools.asp) National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- Community Education (http://www.drugfree.org/community-education) The Partnership for a Drug-Free America
- A Family History of Alcoholism: Are You At Risk? (http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/FamilyHistory/famhist.htm) National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- College Drinking [PDF – 448 KB] (http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/CollegeFactSheet/CollegeFactSheet.pdf) National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- Too Smart To Start (http://www.toosmarttostart.samhsa.gov/Start.aspx) Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Minority Women's Health: Alcoholism and drug abuse (http://www.womenshealth.gov/minority-health/american-indians/alcoholism-drug-abuse.cfm) Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health
- Alcohol Use in Older People (http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/alcohol-use-older-people) National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging
- Using Alcohol to Relieve Your Pain: What Are the Risks? [PDF – 376 KB] (http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/PainFactsheet/Pain_Alcohol.pdf) National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize co-workers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health promotion event.

Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials. (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit).

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure he or she is available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local-access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.
- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.
- Send a press release.

- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.
- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, libraries, post offices, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.

On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.

Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.

Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic email alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer email alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event, remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at healthfinder.gov. You can contact us at info@nhic.org or send us a tweet @healthfinder (http://twitter.com/healthfinder).

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