



PARTNERS for PREVENTION
A partnership for the prevention of substance abuse among youth!

Alcohol

Alcohol, a depressant, is a liquid obtained by fermentation of carbohydrates by yeast or distillation. There are many different types of alcohol, but Ethanol (ethyl alcohol) is the type of alcohol that is used to make alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine and distilled spirits.

The short term use of alcohol causes decreased heart rate and blood pressure, dilated blood vessels, impaired coordination, motor skills and judgment: impaired memory and possible black-outs (the inability to remember).

The long term use of alcohol causes the blocked absorption of essential nutrients and contributes to malnutrition among heavy drinkers; as a depressant - long term use contributes to mood and emotional changes such as depression and amplifies any pre-existing disorders or disturbances; alcoholism (addiction to the drug alcohol).

The young and the old are most susceptible to the risks of alcohol use. Underage drinking can cause poor decision-making, which can lead to accidents, assaults or alcohol poisoning. More than 4000 young people die each year as a result of alcohol poisoning (*Source: Remove Intoxicated Drivers*). ***People who start drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to become alcoholics as those who begin after the age of 21.***

Alcohol can be dangerous when mixed with other drugs, especially depressants. Because many elderly people are on medications, they should be cautious and always consult their doctor before consuming alcohol in combination with and other drugs, even over-the-counter medications.