



HARMFUL. HELPFUL.



Preventing Drug Abuse and Excessive Alcohol Use

If you're struggling, we can help.

Not only does drug abuse and excessive alcohol use impact your readiness, it can harm the lives of your fellow Marines, friends, and family. The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center Health Promotion and Wellness Department is committed to providing you with the tools you need to fight these harmful addictions. We have the educational materials and resources to help you understand the negative effects of excessive alcohol use and misuse or abuse of over-the-counter and prescription medications so that you can overcome alcohol and drug abuse and live a healthy life.

What is excessive alcohol use?

Excessive alcohol use includes heavy drinking, binge drinking (five or more drinks in one sitting for men or four or more drinks in one sitting for women), underage drinking, and drinking while pregnant.¹ One should also avoid risky drinking (both the daily and weekly limits) which can result in negative health effects; risky drinking is more than four drinks on any day or 14 drinks per week for men, and more than three drinks on any day or seven drinks per week for women.² Some facts:

- ▶ Excessive alcohol use is one of the leading causes of preventable death in the United States, contributing to more than 88,000 deaths per year.¹
- ▶ In the United States, almost 30 people die daily from accidents involving alcohol impaired drivers—one death every 51 minutes.³

What is drug abuse?

Drug misuse and abuse includes any inappropriate use of pharmaceuticals (both prescription and over-the-counter drugs) and any use of illegal drugs. This includes taking medications that were prescribed to someone else and taking medications in ways other than was prescribed, such as for the experience or feelings they cause or in higher doses than recommended. Some facts:

- ▶ Prescription drug misuse and abuse is our nation's fastest growing drug problem. In a typical month, approximately 4.5 million Americans use a prescription pain reliever for nonmedical reasons.⁴ Emergency department visits involving the misuse or abuse of pharmaceutical drugs increased 114% between 2004 and 2011.⁵
- ▶ More than 7.5 million children live with at least one parent who abuses alcohol or other drugs.⁶ Children of parents with substance use disorders are more likely to experience abuse or neglect, as well as physical, academic, social, and emotional problems.⁷

Take action if you notice a problem.

If you or someone you know is at risk:

- ▶ Talk to your Substance Abuse Control Officer (SACO).
- ▶ Visit your Substance Abuse Counseling Center (SACC).
- ▶ Speak to your unit commander, NCO, or chaplain.
- ▶ Reach out to DoD medical personnel, such as a certified Substance Abuse Counselor or physician.

While the Marine Corps has a zero tolerance policy regarding drug misuse and abuse, with a consequence of administrative separation from the Marine Corps, nothing is more important than your health. If you or someone you know is at risk, please reach out to one of the contacts above or contact your installation's Marine and Family Programs Division or Marine Corps Headquarters Behavioral Health Branch.

To learn how our resources and tools can help keep you fit for service and improve your overall health, visit us at [HTTP://WWW.MED.NAVY.MIL/SITES/NMCPBC/MARINES/PAGES/DEFAULT.ASPX](http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcpbc/marines/pages/default.aspx) and [HTTPS://WWW.MANPOWER.USMC.MIL/WEBCENTER/PORTAL/MRAHOME](https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/webcenter/portal/mrahome).

For more information on your local resources, contact:

¹ What is Excessive Alcohol Use? Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/pdfs/excessive_alcohol_use.pdf. Updated March 2014. Accessed July 2015.

² Moyer, V. Screening and Behavioral Counseling Interventions in Primary Care to Reduce Alcohol Misuse: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement. *Ann Intern Med*. 2013;159(3):210-218. <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Home/GetFile/1/319/alcsmisfinalrs/pdf>. Accessed July 2015.

³ Injury Prevention and Control: Motor Vehicle Safety. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/Impaired_Driving/. Updated January 2015. Accessed July 2015.

⁴ Results from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUHresultsPDFWHTML2013/Web/NSDUHresults2013.pdf>. Published September 2014. Accessed July 2015.

⁵ The DAWN Report: Highlights of the 2011 Drug Abuse Warning Network Findings on Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2k13/DAWN127/sr127-DAWN-highlights.htm>. Published February 2013. Accessed July 2015.

⁶ Data Spotlight: More than 7.5 Million Children Live with a Parent with Alcohol Problems. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/Spot061ChildrenOfAlcoholics2012/Spot061ChildrenOfAlcoholics2012.pdf>. Published February 2012. Accessed July 2015.

⁷ The NSDUH Report: Children Living with Substance-Dependent or Substance-Abusing Parents: 2002 to 2007. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2k9/SAParents/SAParents.htm>. Published April 2009. Accessed July 2015.



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