

# TOP 10 MYTHS ABOUT ALCOHOL USE

Below are the top 10 myths about alcohol use—check it out—you might be surprised!

**1. Myth: Alcohol improves my sexual performance.**

*Fact:* Although you may think that drinking makes you better in bed, psychologically alcohol reduces your performance.

**2. Myth: I can drink and still be in control.**

*Fact:* Drinking impairs your judgment, which increases the likelihood that you will do something you'll later regret such as having unprotected sex, being involved in date rape, damaging property, or being victimized by others.

**3. Myth: Drinking isn't all that dangerous.**

*Fact:* One in three 18 to 24 year olds admitted to emergency rooms for serious injuries are intoxicated. And alcohol is also associated with homicides, suicides, and drowning.

**4. Myth: I can sober up quickly if I have to.**

*Fact:* It takes about 3 hours to eliminate the alcohol content of two drinks, depending on your weight. Nothing can speed up this process - not even coffee or cold showers.

**5. Myth: It's ok for me to drink to keep up with my male friends.**

*Fact:* Women process alcohol differently. No matter how much he drinks, if you drink the same amount as your boyfriend, you will be more intoxicated and more impaired.

**6. Myth: There is no point in postponing drinking until I'm over 21.**

*Fact:* Research shows that the longer you postpone drinking, the less likely you are to ever experience alcohol-related problems.

**7. Myth: I can manage to drive well enough after a few drinks.**

*Fact:* About one-half of all fatal traffic crashes among 18 to 24 year olds involve alcohol. Your impairment is related to your blood alcohol concentration (BAC). Depending on your weight, you can have a BAC of 0.02% after only one drink, which can slow your reaction time and make it difficult to concentrate on two things simultaneously. A BAC of 0.03%

can significantly impair your steering. At 0.04% your vision begins to focus on the center of the road and you cannot respond as well to street signs, traffic signals and pedestrians. By 0.05% your driving will be noticeably erratic, especially to the police.

**8. Myth: I'd be better off if I learn to "hold my liquor."**

*Fact:* If you have to drink increasingly larger amounts of alcohol to get a "buzz" or get "high," you are developing tolerance. This increases your vulnerability to many serious problems, including alcoholism.

**9. Myth: I have to drink to fit in.**

*Fact:* Your peers don't drink as much as you think they do. A recent survey of more than 44,000 college students shows that most students drink little or no alcohol on a weekly basis.

**10. Myth: Beer doesn't have as much alcohol as hard liquor.**

*Fact:* A 12-ounce bottle of beer has the same amount of alcohol as a standard shot of 80-proof liquor (either straight or in a mixed drink) or 5 ounces of wine.

*Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism - (National Institute of Health) -2002*

## What you can do if you believe you or a friend may be experiencing Alcohol and/or Substance problems:

Although managing substance use can be challenging, these types of conditions are treatable. Here are some first steps you can take:

- ◆ Call P&CS at (858) 534-3755, or come directly to our Central Office at Galbraith Hall 190, and request to meet with one of our psychologists; the Intake Coordinator will schedule an appointment for you.
- ◆ During business hours (8:00am-4:30pm): If this is an urgent matter and you need to speak with someone immediately, call (858) 534-3755, and indicate the seriousness of your situation; you will be able to speak with a psychologist shortly.
- ◆ Outside business hours: If this is an urgent matter and you need to speak with someone immediately, call (858) 534-HELP, and your need to speak with a psychologist; you will be able to speak with a psychologist shortly.
- ◆ Attend the Alcohol & Substance Use Forum, led by Dr. Sam Park, Fridays 2:00-3:30pm, Half Dome Lounge, Muir College
- ◆ Take our Online Mental Health Assessment on our website (<http://psychservices.ucsd.edu>)

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(858)534-3755

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