

Do you know?

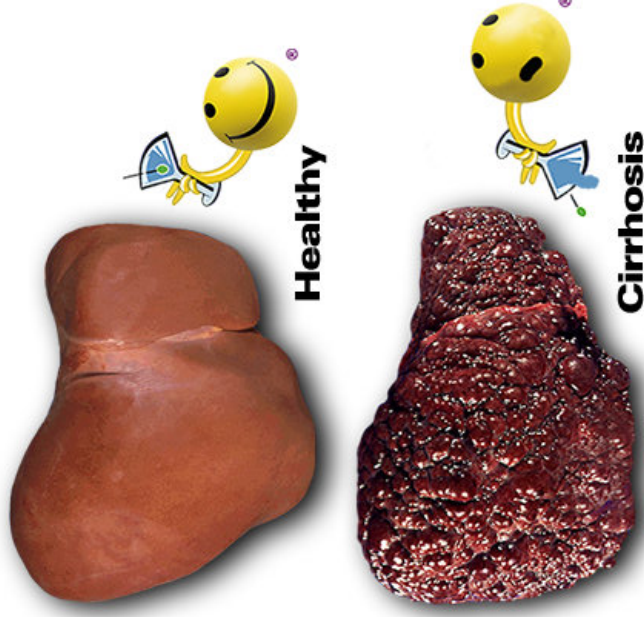
- Ethyl alcohol (ethanol) is the type of alcohol found in alcoholic drinks. It is a depressant (a drug that slows down your brain functioning).
- Another kind of alcohol is called methyl alcohol (methanol). It is found in methylated spirits and is poisonous to drink.
- The more alcohol in the body, the more intoxicated (drunk) a person is, and the longer it takes for the alcohol to leave the body.

Alcohol and pregnancy

- Alcohol use during pregnancy can cause permanent damage to the developing baby. There is no safe amount of alcohol that can be consumed during pregnancy.
- Alcohol and other drugs used by a nursing mother can pass from her bloodstream through breast milk to the nursing baby.
- Alcohol use may: slightly reduce milk production and impair milk release; affect baby's sleep patterns; affect the baby's physical development and early learning.

Alcohol and the body

- It takes about one to two hours for an adult liver to break down the alcohol in one standard drink. If a person drinks more than this, the alcohol builds up in the body.
- For example, if you have two drinks in one hour, it could take the body up to four hours to get rid of all the alcohol. That is why drivers should not drink at all.



In Guyana it is illegal for anyone under 18 to purchase alcohol.

Alcohol is a drug that can affect your body, your mind, and your feelings.

While using alcohol a person may:

- Feel more relaxed and sociable
- Feel drowsy or dizzy
- Do things they would not normally do
- Make poor decisions
- Have trouble walking or moving
- Have slurred speech and blurred vision
- Have lowered blood pressure, breathing, pulse
- Show aggressive or violent behaviour
- Not be able to remember what they did or said (called a blackout)
- Pass out

Long-term Effects

After heavy use over a long period of time, a person may experience:

- Skin problems and stomach ulcers
- Vitamin deficiencies
- Sexual problems, such as decreased sperm production, impotence (the inability to have sexual intercourse) and infertility (the inability to have children)
- Mood changes and emotional changes
- Reduction of learning ability.

Research indicates that adolescents who use alcohol may remember 10% less of what they have learned than those who don't drink.

Health problems resulting from alcohol use include:

- Serious liver disease (cirrhosis or hepatitis).
- Stomach and pancreas disorders.
- Depression and anxiety.
- Muscle and heart muscle disease.
- High blood pressure.
- Damage to nervous tissue.
- Some cancers (mouth, gullet, liver, colon and breast).
- Obesity (alcohol has many calories).
- Accidents - In particular injury and death from fire and car crashes

People who use alcohol also risk having unsafe sex and exposing themselves to sexually transmitted infections.

You may become alcohol dependent

This means that if you stop drinking alcohol for a day or so, you suffer unpleasant withdrawal symptoms. For example: feeling sick, trembling, sweating, craving for alcohol. So, you end up drinking alcohol every day to avoid these symptoms.

You can damage others

Many families have become severely affected by one member becoming a problem drinker. Emotional, financial, and psychological distress often occur in such families.

Many men who have committed suicide in Guyana have done so after drinking alcohol

Quick Tips on saying No to Alcohol

Many young people are under pressure to drink alcohol. Here are some things to say to people who want you to drink;

- Alcohol's NOT my thing.
- No, thanks; I have better things to do!
- I don't feel like it — do you have any soft drink, coconut water
- I do not need alcohol to have a good time or to show how strong I am
- Why do you want to pressure me?
- If you are my friend, you would respect me when I say that I don't want to drink
- I like you guys, but not when you are drunk. Could we try to have a good time without alcohol?
- I know alcohol could make you feel good, but it also causes bad things.



Prepared by Help & Shelter with the support of the British High Commission, Tel 227-3454, 225-4731
Email: hands@networksgy.com
Website: <http://www.sdnpp.org.gy/hands>