

Binge Drinking

Binge drinkers differ from social drinkers by the amount of alcohol consumed and their pattern of drinking.

Some of the indications that you may be a binge drinker:

- often drink to get drunk and believe that heavy drinking is appropriate in social situations.
- consume five or more drinks in a row for men, and four or more drinks in a row for women, over a short period of time.
- patterns can range from "mild" to "severe": Mild binge drinkers may follow a predictable pattern e.g. heavy drinking on birthdays, paydays, days off or celebrations. For the mild binge drinker the binge is usually planned and will not continue for more than one day.
- moderate to severe binge drinker, drinking may no longer be a planned event. Binges occur more frequently with greater amounts of alcohol being consumed and the binge can last for days or weeks rather than just one day.
- does not feel that they are problem drinkers because they do not drink daily. It is a

myth that only daily drinkers have an alcohol problem.

Who Binge Drinks?

Binge drinking is most common in those aged from 18 to 24 years, possibly in response to increased freedom in their lives. As they mature and accept the responsibilities of careers, marriage and families, most binge drinkers gradually become moderate drinkers, for some people however, binge drinking remains a problem.

What Can I Do To Limit My Binge Drinking?

If you are experiencing any physical or social problems due to binge drinking the following tips may help you move to safer drinking levels:

1. Pace your drinking. Limit yourself to no more than one drink per hour.
2. Plan ahead to avoid heavy drinking. Avoid situations or places where you will be tempted to drink too much.
3. Develop leisure activities. Don't make drinking an important part of your recreation.
4. Find ways to cope with problems without

drinking.

If these tips do not help you to move to safer drinking levels, you may have to consider not drinking at all. Abstinence may be necessary if your drinking is affecting these areas of your life:

- Physical/emotional health
- Relationships
- Job performance
- Legal/financial

This article is taken from the AADAC website. If you're concerned about or are having problems with alcohol and other drugs, or gambling, contact AADAC

by calling toll-free 1-866-33AADAC or visit our Web site at www.aadac.com



National Addictions Awareness Week is the third week of November (November 18 - 24, 2007). The goal of NAAW is to provide information and promote activities that generate awareness of substance and gambling issues. During NAAW, the focus is on celebrating with communities to prevent

addictions across Canada. NAAW has become an avenue for effectively mobilizing communities in working together towards a common goal, as well as strengthening a partnership of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal professionals working in the area of addictions. AADAC's theme is Making a Difference Together, which emphasizes the importance of a whole community working together to prevent alcohol, tobacco, other drug and gambling problems. NAAW is a time to celebrate the joy of an addictions-free lifestyle. It is a time to get involved!

Resources

The Drug/Alcohol Resource Directory is available at the Strathcona County Health Centre located at 2 Brower Drive or at Strathcona County Family and Community Services, 276, 2755 Broadmoor Boulevard (above Smitty's restaurant) in Sherwood Park.