Which of the statements below are true, and which are false? Check your answers on p. 642.

1. A shot of vodka has the same amount of alcohol that a can of beer has.

2. Most of the problems caused by alcohol are due to loss of judgment.

3. One drink can affect a person’s ability to drive.

4. Alcohol overdose can be fatal.

5. Children of alcoholics have an increased risk of becoming alcoholics.

6. Alcoholism affects only the alcoholic.

7. Drunk driving is the No. 1 cause of death among teens in the United States.
SECTION 1
Alcohol Affects the Body

SECTION 2
Alcoholism Affects the Family and Society

SECTION 3
Teens and Alcohol

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www.scilinks.org/health

www.cnnstudentnews.com

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Alcohol Affects the Body

OBJECTIVES
State why alcohol is considered a drug.
List the short-term effects of alcohol use.
Describe the long-term damage that alcohol does to the organs of the body.
Identify three reasons you should not drink alcohol.

Alicia was throwing a party. David thought the party would be fun, but he was nervous. There was going to be beer at the party, but he didn’t want to drink. Would others think he wasn’t cool if they found out he wouldn’t drink?

Alcohol Is a Drug
Alcohol is the drug found in beer, wine, and liquor that causes intoxication. Alcohol is considered a drug because it causes a change in a person’s physical and emotional state. The physical and mental changes produced by drinking alcohol are called intoxication.

All forms of alcohol are dangerous. Many people think that beer is safer than liquor because beer is not as strong. This is not true. One beer contains the same amount of alcohol as a glass of wine or a shot of vodka. No alcoholic beverage is safe. And for people in the United States under the age of 21, no alcoholic beverage is legal to consume.

Beliefs vs. Reality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Reality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Drinking a beer will make me look more mature.”</td>
<td>Stumbling around and acting silly will not make you look mature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If alcohol were that dangerous, it wouldn’t be legal for adults.”</td>
<td>Alcohol is dangerous for adults as well as teens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“If I’ve had a few beers, I can drink some coffee before I drive and still be safe.”</td>
<td>Coffee can make you feel more awake, but it can’t make you sober. Only time can do that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Parties make me nervous, so I need a beer to loosen up.”</td>
<td>When people “loosen up” with alcohol, they often say and do things they will regret later.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Short-Term Effects of Alcohol

Many people are not aware of alcohol’s dangerous and unhealthy effects. The short-term effects of alcohol depend on several factors, including the amount of alcohol consumed, the presence of food in the person’s stomach, and the person’s gender and size.

Effects on the Body  When alcohol enters the stomach, it is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream and carried throughout the body. The short-term effects of alcohol on the body include the following:

1. Alcohol irritates the mouth, throat, esophagus, and stomach. Alcohol can cause a person to feel nauseated and to vomit.

2. Alcohol makes the heart work harder. Alcohol dilates, or widens, the blood vessels. The heart has to work harder to pump blood through the wide vessels.

3. Alcohol makes the body lose heat. When the blood vessels in the skin widen, they make the person feel warm and look flushed. But, the person may actually be getting too cold. Drinking alcohol in cold weather or while in the water can drain too much heat from the body, which leads to hypothermia.

4. Alcohol causes the liver to work harder. The liver breaks down toxic substances, such as alcohol, to neutralize any poisonous effects. But the liver can break down only about one alcoholic drink per hour. Drinking more than that amount causes alcohol to build up and to stress the liver.

5. Alcohol causes dehydration. Dehydration occurs because breaking down alcohol requires water. As a result, the kidneys produce more urine. The water used to break down alcohol is taken from the rest of the body, including the brain. The cells of the brain shrink and may even begin to die. Many of the symptoms of a hangover, such as headache, nausea, and dizziness, are a result of severe dehydration. A hangover is a set of uncomfortable physical effects that are caused by excessive alcohol use.

Effects on the Mind  Alcohol has dramatic effects on the brain. As a depressant, alcohol slows down the nervous system. About 15 minutes after finishing one or two drinks, most people begin to feel more relaxed and more talkative, and they laugh more easily. The relaxing effects are what make alcohol a popular drug.

But after only two drinks, the drinker loses the ability to make good decisions, pay attention, follow complex thoughts, or cope with difficult situations. The drinker loses his or her inhibitions. Inhibitions are the natural limits that people put on their behavior.

After a few more drinks, a person loses the ability to focus his or her eyes. The person slurs his or her speech, loses coordination, and may experience drastic mood swings. The person loses judgment and may do things he or she would never do sober. For example, an intoxicated person may become sexually aggressive or engage in unplanned or unprotected sexual activity.

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CHAPTER 10  Alcohol

Effects at Different Blood Alcohol Concentrations

Blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the amount of alcohol in a person’s blood, expressed as a percentage. Table 1 shows the BACs for men and women depending on the person’s weight and the number of drinks consumed per hour. The list next to the table summarizes the effects of alcohol depending on the person’s BAC. A BAC of 0.08 is the legal limit for driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI). However, even a BAC of 0.02, which is much lower than the legal limit, can affect a person’s ability to drive.

The Dangers of Binge Drinking  The act of drinking five or more drinks in one sitting is called binge drinking. A person can drink a fatal amount of alcohol before the effects of severe intoxication set in.

For most people, eight drinks or more in an hour cause the areas of the brain that control breathing and heart rate to become dangerously depressed. The brain and heart may stop working. This is called alcohol poisoning, or alcohol overdose, and it can be fatal.

### Table 1  Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Drinks per hour*</th>
<th>BAC</th>
<th>Effects of alcohol at different blood alcohol concentrations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>90 to 110 pounds</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male 0.04</td>
<td>Female 0.05</td>
<td>0.02  slowed reaction time; feeling of relaxation, warmth, and well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Male 0.11</td>
<td>Female 0.14</td>
<td>0.05  feeling of euphoria; loss of inhibitions; decreased judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Male 0.19</td>
<td>Female 0.23</td>
<td>0.10  impaired vision, judgment, reflexes, and coordination; mood swings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>110 to 130 pounds</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male 0.03</td>
<td>Female 0.04</td>
<td>0.15  seriously affected coordination; blurred vision; severely impaired speech; difficulty walking and standing; memory problems, mood swings; violent behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Male 0.09</td>
<td>Female 0.11</td>
<td>0.2   blackouts; memory loss; stomach irritation; vomiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Male 0.16</td>
<td>Female 0.19</td>
<td>0.25  loss of consciousness; numbness; dangerously slowed breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>150 to 170 pounds</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male 0.02</td>
<td>Female 0.03</td>
<td>0.3   coma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Male 0.07</td>
<td>Female 0.09</td>
<td>0.4–0.5  death from alcohol poisoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Male 0.12</td>
<td>Female 0.14</td>
<td><strong>ACTIVITY</strong> If a girl weighs 120 pounds and has three drinks in 1 hour, what will her BAC be? How will she be affected?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A 12-ounce beer, a 6-ounce glass of wine, and a 1.25-ounce glass of whiskey each qualify as one drink and have the same alcohol content.

### Myth
If I weigh 160 lbs, I can drink three beers without affecting my driving because I’ll still be under the legal limit of 0.08.

### Fact
The ability to drive is affected even at a BAC of 0.02. Just one drink can affect a person’s ability to drive safely.

Source: National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information.
Three symptoms of alcohol poisoning are extreme vomiting, loss of consciousness, and dangerously slowed breathing. If a person has passed out from drinking alcohol, get medical help immediately. Then turn the victim onto his or her side. Alcohol overdose causes vomiting, even when a person is unconscious. If the person is lying face up, he or she may choke and die. If the person is not breathing and has no pulse, someone certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) should administer CPR.

**Long-Term Effects of Alcohol**

The long-term effects of alcohol use are serious. You do not have to be an alcoholic to suffer the effects in Figure 1. Repeatedly stressing your body with a toxic chemical eventually takes a toll on your health.

**Permanent Damage to the Body** Alcohol can damage the heart. Alcohol can cause an irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure (hypertension), and enlargement of the heart. Alcohol can also cause anemia, a decrease in red blood cells or hemoglobin. Red blood cells carry oxygen to the body.

For more information about CPR, see the Express Lesson on pp. 582–585 of this text.
Alcohol can have devastating effects on the liver. Long-term drinking can lead to hepatitis (inflammation of the liver), liver cancer, and cirrhosis. Cirrhosis (suh ROH sis) is a disease that replaces healthy liver tissue with scar tissue and is usually caused by long-term alcohol use. Cirrhosis is the 12th leading cause of death in the United States. Half of these deaths are due to chronic alcohol abuse.

Alcohol can also damage the esophagus and stomach. For example, alcohol causes irritation and bleeding of the stomach lining. Long-term alcohol abuse has been linked to cancer of the mouth, esophagus, and stomach.

Alcohol also damages the small intestine and makes absorbing vitamins and minerals difficult. It irritates the pancreas and may increase the risk of pancreatic cancer. It also affects the body’s immune system—it reduces the body’s ability to fight disease.

Over time, heavy drinking can put too much strain on the kidneys. Excessive drinking can also result in loss of bladder control.

Permanent Damage to the Brain Alcohol causes permanent changes in the brain due to cell death from repeated dehydration and lack of oxygen. Alcoholism is the second leading cause of dementia in the United States. Dementia is a decrease in brain function that includes personality changes and memory loss. While alcohol-related dementia is seen only in people who have been alcoholic for a very long time, some evidence suggests loss of brain function occurs in virtually all heavy drinkers.

Alcoholism is the second leading cause of dementia in the United States, after Alzheimer’s disease.

### REVIEW

**Using Key Terms**
1. **Identify** the term for “the drug in wine, beer, and liquor that causes intoxication.”
2. **Define** intoxication.
3. **Identify** the term for “the amount of alcohol in a person’s blood, expressed as a percentage.”
4. **Define** cirrhosis.
5. **Identify** why alcohol is considered a drug.
6. **Summarize** the short-term effects of alcohol on the body.
7. **Identify** which of the following is not a short-term effect of alcohol.
   a. poor vision
   b. poor judgment
   c. reduced reaction time
   d. increased self-control

**Understanding Key Ideas**
8. Compare the BAC that represents the legal limit for DUI with the BAC at which driving is first impaired.
9. Describe the dangers of binge drinking.
10. Identify which of the following is a long-term effect of alcohol use.
    a. dead brain cells
    b. stomach bleeding
    c. irregular heart beat
    d. all of the above

**Critical Thinking**
12. What type of behavior would you expect to find at a party where people are drinking? Why do you think teens drink?
13. If a 160-pound boy drank five beers in 2 hours, what effects might the boy experience? (Hint: See Table 1.)
Alcoholism Affects the Family and Society

**OBJECTIVES**
- State the difference between alcohol abuse and alcoholism.
- Describe the stages in which alcoholism develops.
- Identify the warning signs of alcoholism.
- List three ways that alcohol use can have a negative effect on family life.
- Describe how alcoholism affects society.
- Summarize two treatment options for overcoming alcoholism.

**KEY TERMS**
- **alcohol abuse** drinking too much alcohol, drinking it too often, or drinking it at inappropriate times
- **alcoholism** a disease that causes a person to lose control of his or her drinking behavior; a physical and emotional addiction to alcohol
- **enabling** helping an addict avoid the negative consequences of his or her behavior
- **codependency** a condition in which a family member or friend sacrifices his or her own needs to meet the needs of an addict
- **fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS)** a set of physical and mental defects that affect a fetus that has been exposed to alcohol because of the mother’s consumption of alcohol during pregnancy

Eva was in her room when she heard the arguing begin. “Where have you been?” her mother asked. “Don’t start with me again,” said her father, “I can have a beer if I want to.” Eva knew the yelling would start, and then the crying would begin. When was this ever going to end?

**What Is Alcoholism?**
Alcohol is the most widely used and abused drug in our society. **Alcohol abuse** is drinking too much alcohol, drinking it too often, or drinking it at inappropriate times. **Alcoholism** is a disease that causes a person to lose control of his or her drinking behavior. The drinker is both physically and emotionally addicted to alcohol. Alcoholics don’t just crave alcohol. They suffer painful physical symptoms when they do not have alcohol.

**statistically speaking...**
- The percentage of adults who lived with an alcoholic at some point while growing up: 20%
- The number of children currently living in homes with an alcoholic: 11 million
- The percentage of domestic violence cases in which alcohol is involved: 75%
Alcoholism Develops in Stages

When Eva’s dad lost his job, he started drinking more frequently. He had a new job now, but he couldn’t seem to quit drinking.

Like all types of drug addiction, alcoholism develops over time. **Figure 2** shows how the stages of alcoholism are the same as those of any type of drug addiction.

1. **Problem drinking**  Alcoholism begins with experimentation. No one who experiments with alcohol believes that he or she will become an alcoholic. Most alcoholics say that they first began drinking to have fun. At some point, people who become alcoholics move from experimental use to a regular pattern of abuse.

   In many cases, initial experimentation gradually becomes social drinking. **Social drinking** is drinking alcohol as part of a social situation, such as on a date or at a party. Social drinking has rules: Do not drink alone, and do not drink just to get drunk. The alcohol abuser starts drinking to avoid boredom, to escape anxiety, to relieve stress, or to cope with depression.

2. **Tolerance**  As alcohol abuse continues, the person becomes tolerant to alcohol. Tolerance develops after repeated drinking when the user finds that it takes more alcohol to get the same effect. If alcohol abuse increases, the drinking or recovering from being drunk take up most of the individual’s time. Family life, friends, work, schoolwork, and other activities are neglected. Drinkers become secretive, paranoid, and defensive as they try to hide their drinking behavior.

3. **Dependence**  Over time the drinker’s body begins to need alcohol to feel normal. Without alcohol, the drinker experiences withdrawal symptoms such as anxiety, sweating, shaking, and nausea. This stage is called **dependence**.

4. **Alcoholism**  Eventually, the drinker is addicted to alcohol. The person craves alcohol and cannot control his or her drinking. The alcoholic drinks and gets drunk nearly every day. Being addicted to alcohol means putting the drug before everything else. Some alcoholics will substitute alcohol for food, which can lead to serious health problems such as malnutrition.

   Each stage leading to alcoholism may last a long time. However, by the time the alcoholic seeks help, he or she may look back and wonder how his or her drinking got so out of control.
Risk Factors for Alcoholism  It’s not clear why some people can drink alcohol without becoming addicted, while others become alcoholics. Alcoholism probably results from a combination of psychological, environmental, behavioral, and physical factors. Examples of these factors are discussed below.

- **Age**  For teens, the most important risk factor for alcoholism is age. Teens who start drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to become alcoholics than people who wait until they’re 21 to drink. The brains of adolescents are undergoing tremendous growth and development, so they are particularly vulnerable to the effects of alcohol.

- **Social environment**  Hanging out with friends who drink alcohol increases the chance that a person will drink. Peer pressure, persuasive advertising, and the desire to fit in can influence a person to drink.

- **Genetics**  Research has shown that genetics may play a part in whether a person becomes an alcoholic. Alcoholism tends to run in families. The male children of alcoholic fathers have a 25 percent risk of becoming alcoholics. Children of nonalcoholics have a 7 to 9 percent risk.

- **Risk-taking personality**  People who are impulsive, like novelty, and enjoy taking risks have a greater chance of becoming alcoholics than people who do not engage in risky behavior. It is important to remember that a risk factor may increase the chance that something will happen, but risk factors can’t determine your future. Regardless of how many risk factors you have, you still have a choice about whether or not to drink.

**Warning Signs of Alcoholism**  There are some warning signs that a person may be suffering from alcohol addiction. For example, as alcoholism develops, alcohol becomes an increasingly important part of a drinker’s life. Alcohol may be used to deal with anger, disappointment, and frustration. The drinker begins to have a difficult time putting limits on drinking. The person finds it almost impossible to resist having another drink.

Alcoholics may be uncomfortable around friends who don’t drink. Personal and professional relationships suffer, which causes additional stress for the alcoholic. Alcoholics usually battle feelings of depression or hopelessness. They might even talk about or try to commit suicide.

Most drinkers can’t recognize these symptoms in themselves. The inability to see these symptoms is called denial. Denial is an important component of all addictions. Because addicts deny having a problem, friends or family members, employers, and sometimes the courts usually have to step in to stop the addictive process.
Alcoholism Affects the Family

Getting up in the morning is hard on Eva. She knows that she’ll see her mom’s red, swollen eyes. Eva always thinks that if she had helped out more when her dad lost his job, he might not drink so much now. She knows it isn’t her fault, but she still feels guilty. Alcoholism affects everyone who interacts with the alcoholic. Families of alcoholics suffer in many ways, including

- **Guilty feelings** Family members often feel guilty, as if their loved one’s alcoholism is somehow their fault. It is not.
- **Unpredictable behavior** The families of alcoholics never know what to expect. An alcoholic may be depressed in the morning, happy in the afternoon, and violently angry by nighttime.
- **Violence** Families of alcoholics are more likely to become victims of violence than families of nonalcoholics are.
- **Neglect and isolation** Alcoholics usually spend their time preoccupied with drinking. Children of alcoholics often feel as if the alcoholic parent does not have time to care for them.
- **Protecting the alcoholic** Family, friends, or employers sometimes enable an alcoholic. Enabling means helping an addict avoid the negative consequences of his or her behavior. For example, when Eva’s dad has a hangover and can’t go to work, her mom often calls his boss to say that he is sick.
- **Ignoring one’s own needs** Codependency is the condition in which a family member or friend sacrifices his or her own needs to meet the needs of an addict. Family members are so wrapped up in taking care of the drinker that their own lives suffer.

In the end, alcoholism affects both the drinker and the people the drinker loves the most.

**Families of Teen Alcoholics** When teens drink they hurt not only themselves but also their families. Teens must acquire alcohol illegally. Teen alcoholics lie to their families to avoid getting caught. They often become angry or abusive when confronted about their drinking problem. Just as a parent’s alcoholism puts stress on children, a teen’s alcohol problem puts stress on his or her parents.

**Alcohol and Pregnancy** Alcoholism is so difficult to overcome that alcoholics who become pregnant find it difficult to stop drinking. In 1999 and 2000 combined, about 12 percent of pregnant women continued to use alcohol. Heavy drinking during pregnancy can lead to fetal alcohol syndrome. Fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) is a set of physical and mental defects that affect a fetus that has been exposed to alcohol because of the mother’s consumption of alcohol during her pregnancy. Children with FAS have various physical deformities and mental retardation. Some babies have to be cared for the rest of their lives. FAS is the leading preventable cause of mental retardation in our country.
Alcoholism Affects Society

If someone tells you that his or her drinking does not affect others, don’t believe him or her. The truth is that alcoholism touches everyone. Society pays huge emotional, physical, and financial costs for the misuse of alcohol and for alcoholism. For example, alcohol abuse often leads to car wrecks, drowning, and other accidents that kill or injure both drinkers and nondrinkers. Do you know anyone in your community who has been injured or has died because of an alcohol-related accident?

Many cases of murder, family violence, child abuse, rape, and assault are attributed to alcohol-related violence. Alcohol plays a major role in violence and crime. Alcoholism leads to the destruction of the family.

Alcoholism takes away money and resources from society. For example, drinkers get sick far more often than nondrinkers do. Alcoholism leads to missing days of school or work. Money is spent on treating alcohol-related illnesses, including alcohol abuse. Money is spent to cover losses due to alcohol-related crime. As a result of alcohol-related crime, more public services, such as ambulances, law enforcement, and legal services are needed.

Analyzing DATA

Costs of Alcohol to Society

1. Each slice of the pie indicates a percentage of the total cost of alcohol to society.

2. The asterisk indicates the total cost of alcohol to society.

Costs of Alcohol to Society*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td>Lost productivity due to alcohol-related illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Lost productivity due to premature death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14%</td>
<td>Medical bills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Auto crashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Crime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Costs equaled $185 billion in 1998.

Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Your Turn

1. What percentage of the total costs of alcohol to society are due to health problems?

2. What was the cost of alcohol due to crime, expressed in dollars? (Hint: Use the information next to the asterisk.)

3. What fraction of the costs of alcohol to society are due to medical bills?

4. CRITICAL THINKING Why do you think the majority of the costs of alcohol to society are related to health problems?
Alcoholism Can Be Treated

Overcoming alcohol addiction is not easy, but it can be done. Because addiction changes the brain, freeing oneself from alcoholism takes a lot of support and, above all, help.

Treatment Programs To get help learning to live without drinking, alcoholics should participate in some form of treatment. The treatment helps the alcoholic endure the difficult stages of withdrawal (the process of discontinuing use of a drug to which the body is addicted). During withdrawal, a person may suffer extreme nervousness, headaches, chills, nausea, seizures, and uncontrollable shaking. Treatment programs also try to help the alcoholic understand why he or she became addicted to alcohol.

There are a variety of treatment options for alcoholics. Treatment programs include both inpatient and outpatient care. Inpatient centers provide a sheltered place to go through withdrawal while getting counseling. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is the most widely used program for treating alcoholism. The AA method for recovery involves 12 steps. Through regular meetings and shared experiences, AA members bring themselves and each other closer to a life that is free of alcohol and full of emotional, physical, social, and spiritual well-being.

Al-Anon and Alateen Al-Anon and Alateen are programs that provide treatment and support to the families of alcoholics. Al-Anon is designed to help family members talk about and share advice on the problem of living with an alcoholic. Alateen is specifically designed to help teenagers cope with this situation. There are local chapters of AA, Al-Anon, and Alateen in just about every community in the United States. Check the phone book for local chapters.

SECTION 2 REVIEW Answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper.

Using Key Terms
1. Define alcohol abuse.
2. Compare the terms enabling and codependency.
3. Identify the term for “the physical and mental defects that affect a fetus that has been exposed to alcohol because of the mother’s consumption of alcohol during pregnancy.”
4. Distinguish between alcohol abuse and alcoholism.
5. Describe the stages leading to alcoholism.
6. Name six warning signs of alcoholism.
7. Summarize the effects of alcoholism on the family.
8. Identify which of the following is a way in which alcoholism affects society.
   a. destruction of the family
   b. increased medical costs
   c. increased crime
   d. all of the above
9. Compare two programs for treating alcoholism.

Critical Thinking
10. Making GREAT Decisions What would you do if you noticed a friend displaying several of the warning signs of alcohol abuse?
Teens and Alcohol

OBJECTIVES

Identify the role alcohol plays in teen driving accidents.
List the legal consequences of underage drinking.
Summarize how underage drinking can harm a teen’s future.
List three ways you could refuse alcohol if it were offered to you. LIFE SKILL
Identify student groups and organizations that are involved in educating people about the dangers of alcohol. LIFE SKILL

David heard the news on Sunday. Four people from his English class were in a car accident coming home from Alicia’s party. The driver and one of the girls were seriously injured. The other two students were killed. David couldn’t believe it. If he had asked the driver for a ride home after the party, he might have been killed or injured, too.

Drinking and Driving, a Deadly Combination

The No. 1 cause of death among teens is motor vehicle accidents. The majority of these accidents are alcohol related. All of the skills you need to drive are impaired by alcohol. For example, alcohol

- slows your reaction time
- affects your vision
- makes you drowsy
- reduces your coordination
- affects your judgment

As you learned earlier, even a small amount of alcohol can impair your ability to drive. A single drink can make you unsafe behind the wheel!

An estimated 513,000 people in the United States are injured in alcohol-related car crashes every year. About 3 in every 10 people in the United States will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some point in their lives. When drunk driving results in an accident, the outcome is often deadly. While only 7 percent of motor vehicle crashes involve alcohol, about 39 percent of fatal crashes involve alcohol. Drunk driving is the nation’s most frequently committed violent crime.
Drinking, Driving, and the Law  Alcohol use is illegal for people under 21 years of age. To prevent drunk driving from claiming lives, the law has set heavy penalties for people caught driving drunk. Anyone caught driving with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 percent or greater will be arrested for driving under the influence (DUI). In some states, a higher limit, about 0.10 percent, puts you into a more serious category, driving while intoxicated (DWI).

Zero Tolerance  All 50 states have enacted zero tolerance laws for people under the age of 21. This means that it is illegal for people under the age of 21 to drive with any amount of alcohol in their systems. Educational campaigns have been spreading the word to teens that zero tolerance means zero chances. Violating zero tolerance laws can result in loss of driver’s license, expensive fines, and community service.

Among adults, penalties for drunk driving have been increasing to discourage people from driving drunk. Currently, penalties include arrest, heavy fines, suspension of one’s driver’s license, and possible jail time.

Getting Home Safe and Sober  Although you cannot control other people’s drinking and driving behavior, there are ways you can protect yourself from dangerous situations caused by intoxicated drivers. So what can you do to protect yourself from the dangers of alcohol on the road?

1. Don’t drink. Use the methods discussed later to resist the pressures to drink.

2. Plan ahead. Before you go anywhere that alcohol may be served, plan a safe way home. You or someone else may need to volunteer to be the designated driver. A designated driver is a person who chooses not to drink in a social setting so that he or she can safely drive himself or herself and others.

3. Have an arrangement with your parents or guardian to pick you up if you need a safe ride home. Discuss this arrangement with your parents in advance. You may want to design a contract in which you promise never to drink and drive and your parents or guardian promises to provide you with a safe ride at any hour, no questions asked.

4. Call a cab. Many cities have programs that provide safe rides for free or at reduced rates to people who have been drinking. It’s worth a cab fare to live to see tomorrow. Whatever you do, don’t get into a car with someone who has been drinking.

What can you do if a friend is going to drink and drive? If all else fails, take their keys. They will probably be angry with you, but at least they’ll be alive to thank you later. Once they sober up, they’ll be glad to know that someone cares enough about them to save their lives.
Drinking Puts Your Future at Risk

Alcohol use is a high-risk behavior for many reasons. Drinking and driving claims the lives of thousands of teenagers every year. However, drinking and driving is not the only risk of alcohol use.

**Drinking and Jail**  Because the legal age for drinking alcohol is 21, buying, trying to buy, or possessing alcohol is illegal for teens. Teens are automatically charged with *minor in possession* (*MIP*). And if teens are drinking in a public place, the charge of *public intoxication* (*PI*) is usually added on. Having a fake identification can cause a teen to get arrested, too.

If you get caught doing any of these things, you can end up in jail, on probation, and with a police record. You also risk losing the trust and respect of your family. A criminal record can also affect your chances of getting a job or getting into college.

**Drinking and Sexual Activity**  Alcohol makes it hard to think clearly. For example, drinking can lead a person to participate in unplanned sexual activity. Sexual activity can result in an unplanned pregnancy, a sexually transmitted disease (STD), and the emotional pain of an unhealthy sexual relationship. Alcohol is also the most common drug associated with date rape. By choosing not to drink, you’ll stay in control of your mind and your body.

**Drinking and Diving**  Alcohol use plays a role in more than 38 percent of all drowning accidents in the United States. Diving under the influence of alcohol can lead to head and neck injury, brain damage, spinal cord injury, and paralysis.

**Drinking and Teen Brains**  Alcohol use also affects the development of the brain. The effects of alcohol are much more potent in brains that are still rapidly developing, such as the brains of teens. The changes that alcohol causes in young brains greatly increases the risk of alcoholism.

Drunk driving is a serious crime that has very serious consequences.
Saying No to Alcohol

Being a teenager is challenging. Teens face many kinds of pressures. Peer pressure is the most common reason teens start drinking. Teens also face pressure to drink from advertising, TV, and movies. Most of the time, teens aren’t pressured directly. But just because no one says “drink this beer or I won’t be your friend any more” doesn’t mean that the pressure isn’t there. It can be hard to say no to your friends if they want you to drink with them. To stick to your decision not to drink, you have to know how to say no.

Don’t Set Yourself Up
The most effective way to avoid alcohol is to stay away from people who drink and places where others are drinking. If you’re not there when the beer is passed around, you won’t be tempted to take one or feel forced to join in. Surround yourself with friends who share your views about avoiding alcohol.

Practice Saying No
Even if you try, staying away from alcohol is not always possible. If you find yourself in a situation in which someone offers you a drink, you can use some of the ideas below.

1. **Buy yourself time.** Find a place where you can be alone to think about what you can do to get out of the situation. For example, you can go to another room, to the bathroom, or outside. Once you have time to collect your thoughts, saying no will be easier.

2. **Give good reasons why you choose not to drink.** For example, Hannah went to a party with her friend Angela. Angela said, “Come on Hannah, one wine cooler isn’t going to hurt you.” Hannah responded, “I promised I would get us both home safely. Do you want me driving you home if I’m drunk?”

3. **State the consequences that could result if you do drink.** For example, Angela said, “Hannah, give me a break. When did you become such a goody-two-shoes? It’s just like drinking a fruit punch.” Hannah then replied, “Angela, you know my parents would ground me forever if I came home drunk.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If You Hear This…</th>
<th>You Can Say This…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Come on, just one.”</td>
<td>“One is more than I want.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Everyone is doing it.”</td>
<td>“Then, at least one of us will be sober enough to drive home.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It’ll be fun.”</td>
<td>“I’m already having a great time without it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“What are you worried about?”</td>
<td>“I’m worried about how I’ll look with my head in the toilet.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Don’t you want to party?”</td>
<td>“That’s what I’m doing. Come on; let’s go dance.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can you resist the pressure to use alcohol? Know how to say no.
4. **Say no firmly.** *No* is a simple and powerful word. It sends a clear message about your intentions. If you say it clearly and look the other person in the eye while you’re talking, the meaning is unmistakable. When Angela grabbed a wine cooler and stuck it right into Hannah’s hand, Hannah said, “Angela, listen to me. I said no!”

5. **If necessary, say no again and include an alternate activity.** Angela pressured Hannah again. “Just have one. You’ll be sober by the time we’re ready to leave.” Hannah responded, “No thanks, Angela. I really don’t want to. Why don’t we go dance instead?”

6. **Walk away.** What do you do if saying no isn’t enough? You’ve stated your position. You’ve defended your decision. The person still insists. You have the option to walk away. Friends who don’t respect your values and opinions aren’t true friends anyway. Offer your friends the opportunity to join you. You may find that your friends will want to follow your example. For example, at this point, Hannah can say, “Angela, I’m going to go dance with John. Do you want to come, or should I meet you later?”

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**ALCOHOL AND ADVERTISING**

**Materials**
- 5 popular magazines
- scissors
- poster board
- glue
- markers

**Procedure**
1. **Look** through several magazines for alcohol advertisements.
2. **Cut** out two ads to include in a poster.
3. **Glue** the ads to the top third of the poster board.

4. **Describe** below each ad ways you think companies try to get people to buy alcohol.
5. **Design** new advertisements on the bottom third of the poster that show the true consequences of alcohol use.

**Conclusions**
1. **Evaluating Information** Do alcohol ads represent the true results of alcohol use? Explain.
2. **Summarizing Results** What are some of the most common ways companies try to convince people to buy alcohol?
3. **Predicting Outcomes** How do you think ads for alcohol influence teens?

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**LIFE SKILL**

**Evaluating Media Messages**

4. **CRITICAL THINKING** What can you do to help keep alcohol use from negatively affecting the lives of your friends and family?
5. **CRITICAL THINKING** What alternative activities can you suggest to a friend who wants to drink alcohol?
Joining the Fight Against Drunk Driving

People and organizations are aware of the great damage caused by alcohol and are doing something about it. For example, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), formerly Students Against Drunk Driving, are involved in this fight. MADD is an organization that promotes stricter penalties for people who drive drunk. SADD is a school-based organization dedicated to addressing underage drinking, impaired driving, drug use, and other destructive decisions and killers of young people.

You can join a SADD chapter at your high school. If your school doesn’t have a chapter you can start one yourself. Planning and participating in alcohol-free activities, such as those shown in Figure 3, can help people see that no one needs alcohol to have a good time.

Figure 3
Life's healthiest and happiest activities never include drinking alcohol.

ACTIVITY Plan a fun activity the whole class could participate in that does not include alcohol. Be sure to keep the cost per person very low.

SECTION 3

Review

Using Key Terms

1. Identify the term that means “a person who chooses not to drink alcohol in a social setting so that he or she can safely drive himself or herself and others.”

Understanding Key Ideas

2. Identify the No.1 cause of death among teens.
   a. heart disease
   b. suicide
   c. motor vehicle accidents
   d. AIDS

3. List the legal charges that a teen can face if he or she is caught drinking and driving.

4. Identify three ways that alcohol use can harm a teen’s future.

5. Evaluate how alcohol use can affect a person’s behavior.

6. **LifeSkill** Practicing Wellness Identify three ways that you can help prevent alcohol from harming your friends and loved ones.

7. **LifeSkill** Refusal Skills State five ways to refuse if a friend offers alcohol to you.

8. Identify two organizations that are involved in educating people about the dangers of alcohol.

Critical Thinking

9. **LifeSkill** Evaluating Media Messages Movies, TV, and advertisements often encourage audiences to drink by making alcohol consumption seem appealing and sophisticated. What is the media not telling viewers about alcohol?
# Key Terms

### SECTION 1
- alcohol (242)
- intoxication (242)
- blood alcohol concentration (BAC) (244)
- binge drinking (244)
- cirrhosis (246)

### SECTION 2
- alcohol abuse (247)
- alcoholism (247)
- enabling (250)
- codependency (250)
- fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) (250)

### SECTION 3
- designated driver (254)

# The Big Picture

- Alcohol is a dangerous drug that has serious short- and long-term effects on the body and brain.
- The short-term effects of alcohol on the body include nausea, loss of body heat, dehydration, loss of judgment, reduced reaction time, memory loss, coma, and even death.
- The long-term effects of alcohol use include heart damage, several kinds of cancer, liver damage, kidney damage, and brain damage.
- Alcohol changes the brain in ways that lead to and maintain addiction.

- Alcoholicism is a disease that causes a person to lose control of his or her drinking behavior. Alcoholicism develops in four stages: problem drinking, tolerance, dependence, and alcoholicism.
- The warning signs of alcoholicism include drinking more in order to feel the same effect, drinking alone, drinking to get drunk, and changing one's friends, personal habits, and interests.
- Alcoholicism is a disease that affects the entire family.
- If a pregnant woman drinks, she can cause her unborn child to suffer from fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS).
- Alcoholicism affects society in many ways, including increased violence and crime, lower academic performance and productivity, and increased medical problems.
- Alcoholicism can be treated. People who recover from alcoholicism can lead happy and healthy lives.

- Motor vehicle accidents are the No. 1 cause of death among teens. The majority of these deaths are alcohol related.
- It is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to possess alcohol.
- Teens caught with alcohol can be charged with minor in possession, driving under the influence, or public intoxication.
- Alcohol use has many negative effects on a teen’s future, including a police record, unwanted sexual activity, unplanned pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, rape, violence, injury, and death.
- The best way to protect yourself and your future from the dangers of alcohol is not to drink.
- There are many effective ways to refuse alcohol. Don’t set yourself up, and practice saying “No.”
- Teens can become involved in Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) to help educate other teens about the dangers of drinking alcohol.
Using Key Terms
alcohol (242)
alcohol abuse (247)
alcoholism (247)
binge drinking (244)
blood alcohol concentration (BAC) (244)
cirrhosis (246)
codependency (250)
designated driver (254)
enabling (250)
fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) (250)
to intoxication (242)

1. For each definition below, choose the key term that best matches the definition.
   a. the act of drinking five or more drinks in one sitting
   b. a disease that replaces healthy liver tissue with scar tissue
   c. helping an addict avoid the negative consequences of his or her behavior
   d. the set of physical and mental defects that affect a fetus that has been exposed to alcohol because of the mother’s consumption of alcohol during pregnancy
   e. the drug in wine, beer, and liquor that causes intoxication
   f. a person who agrees not to drink in order to drive themselves and others safely

2. Explain the relationship between the following key terms.
   a. alcohol abuse and alcoholism
   b. intoxication and blood alcohol concentration
   c. codependency and enabling

Understanding Key Ideas
Section 1
3. State why alcohol is considered a drug.
4. List five short-term effects of alcohol use on the body.
5. List five long-term effects of alcohol on the body.
6. Describe the physical and mental effects of alcohol for each of the following blood alcohol concentrations:
   a. 0.05
   b. 0.1
   c. 0.2
   d. 0.4

7. CRITICAL THINKING Give three reasons why the following statement is not true: “If alcohol were dangerous, it wouldn’t be legal for adults.”

Section 2
8. What is the difference between alcohol abuse and alcoholism?
9. Describe each of the following stages that lead to alcoholism.
   a. dependence
   b. addiction
   c. problem drinking
   d. tolerance

10. List five warning signs of alcoholism.
11. Describe three ways alcoholism affects the family.
12. What condition is caused by using alcohol during pregnancy?
13. Describe some of the ways that alcohol reaches every member of a community.
14. CRITICAL THINKING Explain how you would address the following statement: “I’m too embarrassed to go to meetings to talk about my dad’s alcoholism.”

Section 3
15. What role does alcohol play in motor vehicle accidents involving teens?
16. Identify the laws that protect society from drunk driving.
17. How can alcohol use affect a teen’s future?
18. List three things you would say to refuse alcohol. LIFE SKILL
19. What organizations are involved in educating people about the dangers of alcohol?
20. CRITICAL THINKING Write three things you might do to help reduce the number of teens at your school who drink alcohol.
### Activities

**24. Health and Your Community** Imagine that you notice a friend displaying many of the signs of alcoholism. How could you approach that friend and encourage him or her to seek help? Write a short report summarizing your suggestions.

**25. Health and You** Think about the goals you have for your future. Write a list of your goals. Evaluate how alcohol use could prevent you from reaching those goals.

**26. Health and Your Community** Work with a partner to organize a social group that would agree not to drink. Write a contract that lists the reasons that members do not drink and explains the promise that members make when they agree to live free of alcohol.

### Action Plan

**27. Practicing Wellness** Make a plan to protect yourself from the dangers of drunk driving.

### Understanding Graphics

**Refusal Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pressure</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. “Come on, one beer won't hurt you.”</td>
<td>1. “OK. But just one.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “Here, this beer will give you the courage to talk to Steve.”</td>
<td>2. “No way. I'll just end up doing something stupid.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. “If you aren’t going to drink with me, I’m leaving without you.”</td>
<td>3. __________________________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. Which of the responses above is a good example of a refusal to drink alcohol?

22. Write a response that shows the use of a refusal skill to pressure item number three.

23. **CRITICAL THINKING** Why do you think people who drink try to pressure others to drink?

### Standardized Test Prep

Read the passage below, and then answer the questions that follow.

**Students, faculty, and staff of Davis High School are still in shock after the deaths of Mary Jones and Sammy Gray. Mary and Sammy were pronounced dead at the scene of a car accident last night. They were riding home from a party in a car driven by a friend who had been drinking. Although others at the party knew that the driver was impaired by alcohol, nobody thought to take his keys. Memorial services will be held tomorrow at Jackson Funeral Home. Contributions in memory of Mary and Sammy can be made to the Davis High School chapter of Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD).**

28. In this newspaper article, the word *pronounced* means
   A. said to be.
   B. spoken.
   C. severely injured.
   D. noticed to be.

29. What can you infer from reading this newspaper article?
   E. Mary and Sammy didn’t know the driver.
   F. The driver probably didn’t think it was unsafe to be driving.
   G. Mary and Sammy were also very drunk.
   H. Nobody at the party had noticed that the driver had been drinking.

30. Write a paragraph that describes the options that Mary and Sammy had to avoid riding with someone who had been drinking.