

BINGE DRINKING



Sometimes, it's easy to overindulge in drinking. Especially in New Orleans – the home of many festivals, Mardi Gras and the [Go-Cup](#).

Binge Drinking can have severe implications on a person's body, mind and spirit. As a pattern of drinking that brings a person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 grams percent or above, Binge Drinking typically occurs when men consume 5 or more drinks, and when women consume 4 or more drinks, in about 2 hours.*

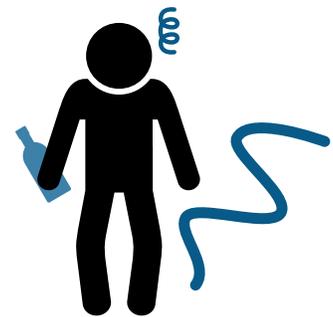
If you think this problem only applies to 20-somethings, think again. A [study from the CDC](#) found that the majority of deaths from binge drinking happen among people ages 35-64.

HOW BINGE DRINKING IMPACTS HEALTH

According to the [National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism](#), alcohol poisoning “occurs when there is so much alcohol in the bloodstream that areas of the brain controlling basic life-support functions (such as breathing, heart rate, and temperature control) begin to shut down.”

Knowing the signs of alcohol poisoning can save lives:

- Mental confusion or stupor – Can't speak or doesn't make sense.
- Passed out and can't be roused – May already be in a coma.
- Vomiting – Throwing up is not a normal result of drinking.
- Seizures – The body shakes or convulses.
- Irregular breathing – Taking 10 seconds or more between breaths.
- Hypothermia – The person is cool to the touch, is pale or has bluish skin color.



WHEN LOW-RISK DRINKING BECOMES A PROBLEM

It's safest to avoid alcohol altogether if you are:

- taking medications that interact with alcohol
- managing a medical condition
- planning to drive a vehicle
- pregnant or trying to become pregnant

**Blood alcohol levels can continue to rise even when a person stops drinking or is passed out. Don't wait for all of the signs to appear before seeking medical help. Long term and permanent injuries may include Stroke, Liver Damage, Heart Disease, Brain Damage, Diabetes and more.*

THE DRINK NUMBERS:

MEN



WOMEN



About 1 in 4 people who exceed these limits already suffer from alcohol abuse and the rest are at risk of developing it.

WHY ARE WOMEN'S LOW-RISK LIMITS DIFFERENT FROM MEN'S?

Women begin to have alcohol-related problems at lower drinking levels than men. One reason is that, on average, women weigh less than men. In addition, alcohol disperses in body water and pound for pound, women have less water in their bodies than men. After a man and woman of the same weight drink the same amount of alcohol, the woman's blood alcohol concentration will tend to be higher, putting her at greater risk for harm.



BINGE DRINKING: A SELF-ASSESSMENT

Answering "Yes" to more than 3 of these is a sign that you may benefit from seeking help:

- Have you ever decided to stop drinking for a week, but your sobriety only lasted a few days?
- Do you ever try to get extra drinks at a party because you need more booze to have fun?
- When you have a hard day or feel under pressure, do you drink heavily?
- Do you ever wake up in the morning after drinking not remembering part of the night before?
- Do you feel guilty about your drinking?
- Do you sometimes stay drunk for days at a time?



HELPING A FRIEND CONFRONT ALCOHOL ABUSE

It's natural to feel hesitation in speaking with a friend about heavy drinking. Alcohol continues to be absorbed into the bloodstream even after someone stops drinking. Telling a friend to stop who's been drinking heavily, can save their life.

- **TIMING IS EVERYTHING:** Timing your conversation correctly could mean the difference between a success and a disaster. If possible, try to time your conversation close to, or directly after your friend has experienced a problem as the result of binge drinking.
- **CONSEQUENCES MATTER:** Talk about how their drinking is already having a negative effect on their life. Focus on how their drinking affects you and others they are close to.
- **DON'T LECTURE:** Remember you're friends; keep your conversation friendly and casual. Avoid sermons and judgments, and making demands or using labels like "alcoholic." You might begin your conversation by saying something like "As you know, I care a lot about you and our friendship. It's because I care so much that I want to talk with you about something that has me concerned..."
- **EXPECT THE WORST:** There is no denying the fact that your friend may get angry at you for bringing up their binge drinking. Don't take their anger personally; it is part of their denial. Chances are, even if your concerns are rejected, you opened the door to self-reflection for your friend.
- **BE READY TO HELP:** When your friend realizes they have a problem, be ready to offer assistance in finding help.



FOR NOMC PATIENTS IN NEED, PLEASE CALL 504-412-1366.

The NOMC is very pleased to announce that **Odyssey House Louisiana (OHL)**, is now providing services to our patients seeking recovery. Established in 1973, OHL offers comprehensive services and effective support systems- nonprofit behavioral healthcare facility with an emphasis on addiction treatment including detox, treatment, physical and mental healthcare, life-skills, counseling and case management that enable individuals to chart new lives and return to our cultural community.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Alcoholism is a disease afflicting millions of people worldwide. Luckily, it's also a treatable health problem:

- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)
- [Alcohol Policy Information System](#)
- [Binge Drinking & Your Health](#)

Self-Assessment and Understanding – The following sites provide questionnaires to help you assess whether or not you or someone you know has a problem with alcohol.

- [Rethinking Drinking: Alcohol and Your Health](#)
- [AlcoholScreening.org](#)

Support – These groups offer support and guidance for alcoholics as well as family and friends of people with alcohol and substance abuse problems.

- [Alcoholics Anonymous \(AA\)](#)
- [Al Anon Family Groups](#)

