

How Addictive Is Alcohol? The Real World Impact On Your Brain & Body

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Alcohol is no doubt one of the most heavily used psychoactive substances across the globe in modern society. In America, almost 56% of adults are said to consume alcohol more than once per month, while a shocking 1-in-4 adults admit to binge drink (drinking to excess) at least once per month. Drinking often seems a given at most social events as nearly every occasion can be marked with alcohol, so this can make it difficult for you to avoid it completely. Despite the fact that alcohol is a legal substance, it can definitely lead to abuse, dependency, and addiction that can last a lifetime. But, how addictive actually is alcohol, and what effect does it have on your mind and body?

How Addictive is Alcohol?

Alcohol can be a very addictive substance, and this is proven by the fact that around 33% of Americans will likely develop some form of alcohol abuse disorder during their lifetime.

Recreational drinking can quickly transition into abuse, which will subsequently lead to dependency and then serious addiction. It's a slippery slope that's hard to navigate away from, especially if your odds are stacked against you. Experiencing some kind of loss, trauma or any other negative situation could make you more susceptible to alcohol addiction, as the substance will mask your pain and upset which is a feeling you might then begin to chase.

An alcohol addiction, or 'alcoholism' for short, will encourage your brain to desperately require alcohol to feel normal. This means that if you were to stop drinking, you will start to experience detox symptoms that are not enjoyable either mentally or physically. These symptoms can last for several days or even weeks as the body slowly purges itself of alcohol, which can make it very difficult for one to remain sober and not give in to the temptation of drinking again.

What is Alcohol's Effect on the Body & Mind?

As alcohol is essentially nothing but a liquid depressant, when you drink your central nervous system and neurotransmitters will be inhibited. This will subsequently change and influence your thoughts, emotions, and the way that you behave, potentially encouraging you to engage in dangerous or even unlawful behavior.

Ethanol, the active ingredient that causes the intoxicating effects you experience whilst drinking alcohol, can do severe damage to your liver and can even be deadly when consumed in excess. If you drink too much alcohol in a short period of time, you risk falling victim to something known as alcohol poisoning which could be fatal unless you are able to seek immediate medical attention.

Whenever you drink alcohol, your brain releases GABA (or gamma-aminobutyric amino acid) which usually leads to relaxation and a more enjoyable mood. However, as soon as you finish drinking and the alcohol begins to leave your system, you then experience a lack of GABA which has the opposite effect leaving you depressed and anxious.

How Can Alcohol Addiction be Treated?

Fortunately, if you or someone you love is suffering from alcohol addiction, you can seek treatment to help regain a sense of freedom and self-control. Every person requires their own unique treatment plan in order to achieve success, as there are many different factors that can influence your addiction.

The most effective treatments for alcohol addiction are [partial hospitalization](#) rehabilitation programs, [intensive outpatient](#) rehabilitation programs, and [outpatient programs](#) that help you transition back into normal life.

Alcoholism can have a physical effect on your body, which is felt far more intensely when detoxing, so it's best to seek out an attentive care service from a trusted recovery center when taking your first steps toward freedom. Most withdrawal symptoms won't last longer than around 7-10 days, but it can take a lot longer for your body and mind to fully recover. The brain needs to relearn how to release neurotransmitters normally, while your liver and kidneys need time to rebalance themselves.

Falling victim to serious alcohol addiction can negatively impact your personal life as well as your physical, mental, and financial health, often leading to devastating consequences that could be avoided through the use of [a rehabilitation program](#). Continuing to consume an excess of alcohol will lead to medical problems like liver damage and put social problems like straining your relationships with family and friends. If this is something that you or someone you love is no longer comfortable experiencing, then there's no time like the present to get in touch with our friendly, reliable team at Evolve Indy to create a unique treatment plan today.

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