

Chapter 21 Lesson 3: The Impact of Alcohol Abuse

Introduction:

Alcoholism is a profoundly destructive disease. The damage it causes extend beyond the problem drinker, affecting his or her family, peers, and community as well. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) is a division of the National Institutes of Health that conducts research into alcoholism and educates the public about this dangerous illness. Read the NIAAA's list of frequently asked questions to learn more about alcoholism, its symptoms, and how it can be treated.

Links to Explore:

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: FAQs for the General Public

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/FAQs/General-English/>

Directions:

- Click on the link and read the NIAAA's list of questions and answers about alcoholism.
 - Then answer the following questions:
1. What are the four primary symptoms of alcoholism?
 2. Do all children of alcoholic parents become alcoholics?
 3. How much alcohol can an alcoholic safely drink?
 4. How is alcoholism treated?
 5. What is the difference between alcohol abuse and alcoholism?
 6. List four warning signs that a person may be a problem drinker.
 7. Identify three groups of people who should avoid alcohol completely.

Answers:

1. Craving for alcohol, loss of control over drinking, physical dependence on alcohol, and increasing alcohol tolerance.
2. No, but alcoholism does tend to run in families.
3. None
4. With a combination of counseling and medications to help a person stop drinking
5. Alcohol abusers drink too much and too often, but unlike alcoholics, they are not dependent on alcohol.
6. Feeling you should cut down on drinking, feeling annoyed when others criticize your drinking, feeling bad or guilty about drinking, and having a drink first thing in the morning

7. Any three of the following:

- Women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant
- People who plan to drive or engage in other activities that require alertness and skill
- People taking certain medications
- People with medical conditions that can be made worse by drinking
- Recovering alcoholics
- People younger than age 21

Additional Links to Explore:

Use the links below to gather additional information on the activity topic. When appropriate, have students extend their research to include important concepts contained in these Web sites.

Alcohol Alerts

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/Publications/AlcoholAlerts/>

Alcoholics Anonymous

<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org/>

Mothers Against Drunk Driving

<http://www.madd.org/home/>