

# APRIL NEWS 2022

Empowering you with information for  
your emotional and physical wellbeing

## Alcohol Awareness Month and Caregiver Care



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***April is National Alcohol Awareness Month.***

The COVID-19 pandemic and at-home quarantine has increased the sales, consumption, and binge-drinking of alcohol. Take a moment for alcohol awareness this month.



**Teamster Family Services**

**877.733.9205**

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## Triggers for Alcohol Use



### Understanding your triggers

Triggers can be different for everyone. If you are working on reducing your alcohol intake, it can help to know your triggers and create coping mechanisms to respond or avoid.



### Human triggers

This is when a specific person or group of people reminds you or encourages you to drink. This can be a friend, family member, coworker, or a team like softball or bowling.



### Social triggers

Many people drink due to social issues such as isolation from family or friends. Trouble with romantic relationships, children or extended family can make drinking an attractive way to deal with stress.



### Environmental triggers

Sometimes a specific town, restaurant, or setting can trigger the urge to drink. This can be visiting your favorite hometown bar or your old college, or a specific date like St. Patrick's Day or Super Bowl Sunday.



### Emotional triggers

This includes positive and negative emotions. When you feel sad, angry, lonely you may turn to alcohol and likewise when you are overcome with happiness or positive thoughts. When we celebrate, we can lose track of our consumption and we can lose our power to say 'no'.



### Read More About Alcohol Use

If you are interested in learning more about alcohol use or support for reduced alcohol consumption, read through our recent alcohol awareness blog: <https://link.uprisehealth.com/alcohol-awareness>

## HEALTH ISSUES RELATED TO ALCOHOL USE

### LIVER PROBLEMS

*Alcohol use can lead to multiple liver disorders including steatosis, alcoholic hepatitis, fibrosis, and cirrhosis.*

### PANCREAS INFLAMMATION

*Pancreatitis, which prevents healthy digestion, can be caused by alcohol use.*

### INCREASED CANCER RISK

*Breast, liver, colorectal, and esophageal cancer have all been linked to alcohol consumption.*

### WEAKENED IMMUNE SYSTEM

*Excessive drinking in one sitting can weaken your immune system for up to 24 hours.*

### HEART HEALTH RISKS

*Over the long-term, excessive alcohol use can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke.*

### GUT DAMAGE

*Since alcohol passes through the gastrointestinal tract, alcohol can cause heartburn, stomach ulcers, gastritis, and internal bleeding.*





## Support for Alcohol Use Disorder

### FINDING AND GETTING HELP

The good news is that no matter how severe the problem may seem, most people with alcohol use disorder or struggling with alcohol consumption can benefit from some form of treatment. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, and what works for one person may not work for another person. There are multiple options that might help including CBT, counseling, medication, and support group.

#### 24-hour helpline

If you or someone you know needs help, call the National Council on Alcoholism's 24-hour helpline at 800-622-2255.

#### Seek clinical support

Doctors and mental health professionals should be well prepared to help you find support and solutions for alcohol use. The more open and detailed you can be about your alcohol use, the better they can help you. They can help guide you to treatment options, give tips for day-to-day lifestyle changes, and talk through any health or personal concerns.

#### Organizations who can help

- » Al-Anon Family Groups
- » Alcoholics Anonymous
- » SMART (Self-Management and Recovery Training) Recovery
- » Secular Organizations for Sobriety (SOS)

### How to help a friend or family member

- » **Speak up and offer your support.** Be sure to show your willingness to go with them to get help. The earlier addiction is treated the better.
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- » **Express love and concern**, as well as specific examples of behavior that have you worried. Don't wait for your loved one to hit rock bottom.
- » **Support recovery as an ongoing process.** Even once your loved one is receiving treatment, it's important to continue to show your support. It can help your loved one make long-term recovery possible.



## Dealing with Stress as a Caregiver

According to a 2020 report from the AARP and the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC), more than 1 in 5 Americans have provided care to either a child with special needs or an adult in the past 12 months. So many of us will have to take care of a friend or a loved one during an illness or surgery recovery—which will usually be short-term caregiving—or during a chronic condition and end-of-life—which might be long-term caregiving.

Caregiving can be a fulfilling and rewarding experience, but it also frequently leads to stress, anxiety, and related mental health strain. So, let's look at some smart ways you can care for yourself while you're caring for others.

### TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE SELF-CARE

- » **Take time for yourself.** We can provide the best help for others when we're functioning at our best, so ensure your needs are being met.
- » **Create a day-to-day self-care plan,** which includes things you enjoy like going for a walk, connecting with people you love, taking a lunch break, or listening to your favorite music.
- » **Be ready to accept help.** You don't have to do everything alone. Consider sharing your experiences with friends and family members, joining a support group, or seeking available resources from Uprise Health. As your EAP, we are here to help.
- » **Prepare realistic goals.** One common struggle that caregivers can experience is having internal unattainable goals that cannot be reached. Then, when a caregiver can't reach them, they struggle with feelings of failure and depression. Caregivers can't cure an incurable disease or become a caregiving master within just a week or two of the new role. But, caregivers can set short, realistic goals that will help them and their care recipient.
- » **Set limits and boundaries for what you can do.** While a caregiver usually does a lot for the person they are caring for, they do not have to—and should not—do everything. Setting boundaries is one of the most important things a caregiver can do. You can say no, and you are not obliged to do everything.

Support is important. Check in with Uprise Health on how we can help. We have a more in-depth resource available for caregiving that dives deeper in burnout that caregivers can experience and provides additional resources for caregivers:

<https://link.uprisehealth.com/caregiver-stress>



## Resources & Events



### *This Month's Featured Webinar*

#### **Empathy on Empty: Compassion Fatigue**

Even the most empathic person can become so overwhelmed by the chronic stress associated with caregiving that negative attitudes start to take over. Join us and learn techniques to help cope with compassion fatigue.

*The monthly webinars with Personal Advantage are available on the 1st day of each month and past topics are available for viewing at any time. To view the webinars, log into the Personal Advantage member site with your assigned Access Code and click "Webinars". Certificates of Completion are available by setting up a personal login and password within the Personal Advantage site.*

#### **Alcohol Awareness Month**

April is Alcohol Awareness Month which is a health awareness campaign sponsored by the National Council for Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD). Its aim is to raise awareness for communities and to help understand the causes and treatment available for one of the nation's biggest health issues. Join Uprise Health as we work together to reduce the social stigma associated with alcoholism and to educate people on how the disease can be addressed; offering help and advice for families as well as direct engagement with those afflicted with alcohol addiction.