



## CSPP and OHA's Rethink the Drink Initiative Communications Toolkit for the Construction Industry

### Introduction

[Rethink the Drink](#) is a brand created by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) that aims to change the conversation about excessive alcohol drinking and how it harms communities in Oregon.

OHA and Lines for Life's Construction Suicide Prevention Program (CSPP) prepared the following communications toolkit to support the construction industry. It's intended to equip companies, owners, trade associations and others with resources to start a conversation with employees or members about the health harms of excessive alcohol use and finding community-driven solutions.

We hope this toolkit will encourage construction companies and their employees to have conversations about coming together as a broader community to talk about this complex issue. It includes resources to help you talk with employees about excessive alcohol use and suicide prevention support, such as the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. This toolkit can help you share information with employees and help your organization understand more about excessive alcohol use and its connection to suicide in the construction industry. Feel free to pick and choose which materials make the most sense for your company or group. You can download the resources, visuals, and other shareable materials in this toolkit [online](#). We also suggest you visit the CSPP website to download the [Construction Industry Suicide Prevention Guide](#).

CSPP is also gathering stories about how alcohol affects the daily lives of people who work in the construction industry. We want to hear from you and your employees. It's important that we address excessive alcohol use and the effects it has on our construction community, crews and families. Because excessive alcohol use affects so many people, sharing personal stories is one good way to shed light on this growing problem.

If you have stories to share or any questions about this toolkit, please visit the [CSPP website](#).

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### **You and your family can get immediate help**

If you or a loved one are struggling with thoughts of suicide or another mental health crisis:

- Call or text **988** or chat **988lifeline.org**
- Call a [local crisis number](#)
- Tell a trusted family member or friend
- Visit CSPP's [Get Help Now!](#) webpage

Check in with your health care provider to discuss what you are thinking and how you are feeling.

Any time you are concerned about suicide and don't know what to do, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 (24 hours every day of the week, 365 days a year).

## Helpful information about excessive alcohol use

The following is a set of facts about how excessive alcohol use affects construction workers and people living in Oregon. You can use these facts to provide people with snippets of information or data about the topic of excessive alcohol use and how it may be affecting your employees or members.

**Data and facts almost never tell the whole story**—we don't recommend just sharing multiple facts with your employees or members, one on top of the other, without a story or narrative to go with it. Instead, pick and choose data points that help strengthen the point you are making. You can choose information from this collection of facts to post to your website, on social media or in an e-newsletter. These facts are intended to paint a broader, real picture of how excessive alcohol use is affecting the industry and start a conversation about ways we can better support one another to drink less.

### Facts about excessive alcohol use in general

#### **Excessive alcohol use: How big is this problem in Oregon?**

More than 2,000 people in Oregon die each year from excessive alcohol use, three times the number who die from other drug overdoses. In fact, 1 in 5 people drink excessively, and consumption in our state is higher than the national average. Given all the attention on curbing drunk driving, it may come as a surprise that the number of driving deaths that involve alcohol has more than doubled in Oregon in recent years—with Oregon having one of the highest rates of alcohol-impaired driving deaths in the nation.

#### **What we mean by excessive drinking: Heavy Drinking vs. Binge Drinking**

- OHA utilizes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) definition of excessive alcohol use. Excessive drinking includes both heavy drinking and binge drinking.
  - **Heavy drinking**, the kind that can harm your health long-term, is 15 drinks or more a week for a man. For a woman, it's 8 drinks.
  - **Binge drinking** is when a man has 5 or more standard drinks in one two-hour occasion. For women, it's 4 or more drinks.
- [What is a standard drink](#), in terms of Alcohol by Volume (ABV)?
  - 12 fl. oz. beer (5% ABV)
  - 5 fl. oz. wine (12% ABV)
  - 1.5 fl. oz. liquor/hard alcohol (40% ABV)
- For some people, drinking *any* alcohol is too much. And no matter who you are, drinking less is better for your health than drinking more.

#### **Excessive drinking can lead to serious health harms, including cancer, liver failure, heart disease and depression**

- In the U.S., 1 in 5 deaths of people ages 20-49 is from excessive alcohol use.
- Excessive drinking increases the risk for cancer, liver failure, heart disease and depression.
  - Binge drinking increases the risk for high blood pressure and strokes.
  - Excessive drinking contributes to three types of liver disease: fatty liver, alcohol-related hepatitis and cirrhosis.
  - Regular, heavy drinking increases your risk for breast cancer and prostate cancer.

- How alcohol and cancer are linked:
  - People might be surprised to learn that alcohol is a carcinogen, which is why it can lead to cancer.
  - Alcohol is classified as a Group 1 carcinogen, meaning it is known to cause cancer. After drinking alcohol, the body breaks it down into acetaldehyde, a chemical that damages your DNA and prevents your body from repairing that damage. With the DNA damaged, a cell can begin growing out of control and create a cancer tumor.
  - Because alcohol is a carcinogen, lower levels of drinking can also be harmful even if you don't feel drunk.

### **Economic consequences of excessive drinking**

- Excessive drinking costs Oregon \$4.8 billion per year from lost earnings for workers and revenue for businesses, health care expenses, criminal justice costs and car crashes.
- That's \$1,100 for every person in Oregon, according to a [report](#) by ECONorthwest.
- At \$2.19 billion (45.6 percent of total costs) in 2019, lost worker productivity made up the largest share of Oregon's total costs attributed to excessive drinking.
- Excessive alcohol use negatively affects worker productivity through increased absenteeism, impaired worker productivity, and increased mortality, all of which reduce the productivity of Oregon businesses.

### **How alcohol connects to suicide and injury**

- Approximately 24% of suicides are estimated to be related to alcohol use. This does not include intentional suicide/poisoning by alcohol.
- Other types of injury deaths are also often alcohol-related. For example:
  - 32% of fall injury deaths
  - 18% of occupational and machine injury deaths
  - 34% of motor vehicle traffic crash deaths
  - 18% of motor vehicle non-traffic crash deaths
  - 18% other road vehicle crash deaths

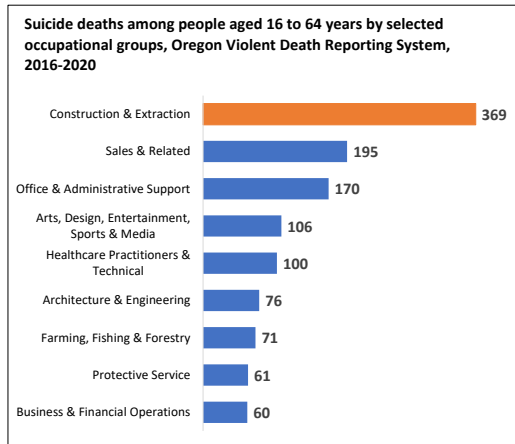
## Excessive alcohol use and its connection to construction and suicide

### The unique stresses on construction workers

Many construction workers face job insecurity, economic hardship, and uncertainty about the future. There is also added stress when trying to maintain a balance between work and family. Adding to this instability is the fact that many workers experience periods of unemployment between projects, with added risk during times of economic recession. Further, the physically demanding nature of construction work takes its toll on the body, leading to injury and pain. Many people turn to alcohol to manage their pain, not realizing that drinking alcohol, particularly binge drinking, can slow recovery from infection and physical trauma, including poor wound healing. Excessive drinking can also trigger mood and behavioral changes or make them worse, including depression, anxiety, memory loss, and alcohol dependency.

### The connection between construction and suicide

- In Oregon, people who work in construction and extraction occupations have the highest number of suicides and the second highest rate (91 per 100,000 workers) of suicides.
- Construction has the highest number of male suicide deaths.



For statewide and local data, you can access the [Oregon Violent Death Reporting System Data Dashboard](#) on OHA's website.

### Construction workers and alcohol use

- Alcohol use, substance misuse and mental health challenges have been found to be prominent factors in death by suicide among construction workers.
- The construction industry often involves some degree of traveling for work, and long hours are common. Spending long periods of time living away from home, family, and friends can be a major stressor. So are job insecurity, economic hardship, and uncertainty about the future.
- Toughness can be seen as a measure for success in the construction industry. This culture can contribute to mental health stigma and prevent people from seeking help, which can lead to people using alcohol to cope.

## Some tips for employees, and ways that companies and organizations can support employees in drinking less

There are many ways we can support each other to drink less and change the conversations we have about alcohol. We encourage you to build a company culture where sobriety for those who choose it is supported, and where employees feel like their physical and mental health are a priority.

Below, you'll find some tips for employees about ways to support their efforts to drink less, as well as some ways you as a company can build a healthy culture with less alcohol.

### Tips for drinking less alcohol:

- [Share your story](#)
- Talk with friends and family about why you're drinking less or choosing not to drink
- Support friends, family and loved ones who want to drink less
- When other people aren't drinking, avoid making assumptions or asking them why they are choosing not to drink
- Set limits
- Count your drinks using a [drink calculator](#)
- Track your drinks through an app
- Time your drinks with longer intervals between sips and the next round
- Eat when drinking
- Find alternatives to drinking, like going for a walk or getting physical activity
- Do something that brings you joy
- Avoid places, activities or situations that cause you to binge drink
- Make events or occasions alcohol free
- [Make a plan](#) and get advice on small changes you can make to drink less, like not keeping alcohol in your home

### How your company or organization can support employees to drink less

- Hold events that don't center around alcohol, or have alcohol-free events
- Support employee decisions to not drink
- Talk about how alcohol affects our daily lives, on and off the worksite
- Talk with other companies or organizations about what they are doing to address excessive drinking
- Ensure that employees know what resources are available to them (Employee Assistance Programs, insurance coverage, etc.)
- Post information in employee spaces
- If you or your organization have other ideas you'd like to share, email [Anna Klein](#)

## Article (for an e-newsletter, blog post or on a company's website)

The following is a pre-drafted article about excessive alcohol use and its effects on the construction industry. It can serve as copy for an e-newsletter, intranet article in your company's employee portal, member communications or shared on your website or blog.

This article could be copied as-is and emailed to employees from your company's CEO, the human resources department, or other members of the leadership team. It can also be used to communicate with members of trade groups or associations. If you'd like to use bits and pieces of this article, it can also serve as a starting point for communications with employees or members. If there is other information you'd like to share, such as a reminder of company benefits for counseling or other support services, or local resources for substance use you'd like to call attention to, please feel free to edit as you see best.

Dear [REDACTED],

All of us in the construction community want to build better lives. We are working hard for ourselves, our families, and our communities with the jobs we all do every day.

But many of us face daily challenges on and off the job site that we often set aside or don't want to admit.

People who work in construction are more likely to drink alcohol excessively, use substances and have mental health problems. That's in part because of the nature of the work we do. We often have irregular work hours, frequent travel away from friends and family, and physical injury. All of these contribute to the high rate of suicide in the construction industry. In fact, men who work in construction die by suicide more than any other occupation.

The connection between alcohol and suicide is well-established. Over [20% of deaths by suicide involved alcohol intoxication](#).

The Construction Suicide Prevention Partnership (CSPP), a Lines for Life program, is part of a national movement to address the high suicide rate in the construction industry. To reduce suicides within construction, we need to talk about alcohol, which is why CSPP has teamed up with Rethink the Drink, an initiative of the Oregon Health Authority. Rethink the Drink aims to decrease excessive drinking and the harm it causes individuals, families, and communities throughout our state.

We are not asking people to quit drinking, but instead to start a conversation about alcohol and how it affects our daily lives.

So, let's lay the groundwork:

- **What is a standard drink?**  
12 fl. oz. beer, 5 fl. oz. wine, 1.5 fl. oz. liquor/hard alcohol
- **What is heavy drinking?**  
Having more than 1-2 drinks every night for a week
- **What is binge drinking?**  
Consuming 4-5 or more drinks on a single occasion



The construction community is not alone in excessive drinking. In Oregon, 1 out of 5 adults drinks excessively. Many people drink excessively and may not realize it. Excessive alcohol use can cause physical harm such as increasing the risk of cancer, liver failure, and heart disease. In construction, we are also at higher risk for injury or death when one of us comes to work hungover or under the influence of alcohol.

From drinks after work with friends, to beers while fishing, to the weekend BBQ or sports games, drinking alcohol can easily add up. Let's support one another by talking about how alcohol affects our daily lives. Are there moments when we can drink less? Can we create opportunities where alcohol doesn't play such a significant role outside of work?

We could all consider new ways to think about alcohol. We welcome your thoughts and ideas.

If you have a story to share about alcohol, suicide and the construction industry, we want to hear from you. Visit the [CSPP website](#) to share your story.

Insert Name

## Tri-fold brochure

The following is a tri-fold brochure created by CSPP and Rethink the Drink. This brochure offers some facts about excessive alcohol use and the construction community. It also shares some of the health harms caused by binge and heavy drinking. It provides some suggested tips for employees or members who are interested in drinking less, as well as resources for support. This brochure could be printed and shared with employees on the job site, during health and safety training sessions, in member communications or even mailed directly to the homes of employees or members of trade groups and associations. You can download a high-res, print-ready PDF version of this brochure [here](#).



## You and your family can get immediate help.

If you or a loved one are struggling with thoughts of suicide or another mental health crisis:

- Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org
- Tell a trusted family member or friend
- Visit [suicide-stops-here.org](https://suicide-stops-here.org)

Check in with your health care provider to discuss what you are thinking and how you are feeling.

Any time you are concerned about suicide and don't know what to do, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 (24 hours, every day of every week, 365 days a year).

CSPP is teaming up with Rethink the Drink to encourage all of us to start a conversation about excessive drinking and how we can rethink the role alcohol plays in our lives.



[suicide-stops-here.org](https://suicide-stops-here.org)  
A program of Lines for Life.



[Rethinkthedrink.com](https://Rethinkthedrink.com)  
An Initiative of the Oregon Health Authority.



Call or text 988  
or chat [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)



**Excessive alcohol use is taking a toll on construction workers.**



## Working in construction can be stressful.

Job insecurity, money issues, times of unemployment, and managing life at home are just a few examples of things that cause stress. That's on top of having a physically hard job that can cause pain and injury. This all takes a toll on you physically, and mentally.

## Excessive drinking can make things worse.

Many people turn to alcohol as a way to manage pain, but it may be causing more health problems. Excessive drinking:

- Slows recovery from infection and injury, including poor wound healing
- Causes long-term health problems like liver disease, heart disease and cancer
- May cause mood and behavioral changes, including depression and anxiety

Alcohol and substance use are contributing factors to why construction workers die by suicide. In Oregon, people in construction and extraction jobs have the highest number of suicides over any other industry.

## We can support each other to drink less.

Job sites can be dangerous. We need to be able to count on our crew members to stay safe. That means coming to work sober and not hungover. But we can also help each other after work. Whether it's having drinks at the local bar, or a couple beers at a friend's BBQ, we can ask ourselves if we need that last beer or cocktail. We aren't saying stop drinking, but to think about how alcohol affects your daily life and if there are small changes you're ready to make to drink less. We encourage you to ask for help from your friends and family if you need it.









## Tips for drinking less alcohol:




<b>Set limits</b> 	<b>Count your drinks</b> 
<b>Track your drinks through an app</b> 	<b>Avoid places or activities that cause you to binge drink</b> 
<b>Eat when drinking</b> 	<b>Go for a walk or get physical activity</b> 
<b>Do something that brings you joy</b> 	<b>Make small changes in your daily life, like not keeping alcohol in your home</b> 

## Images and post copy for social media or company portals

The following are pre-drafted social media posts that you could consider posting on your company or organization's Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or other social media platforms. This set of social media posts includes suggested copy paired with a visual that's co-branded with CSPP and Rethink the Drink. Feel free to edit the copy and use the visuals that make the most sense for you and your organization. For instance, if you have an upcoming health and safety training you're trying to promote that includes excessive alcohol use as a topic, you could also include details about how to attend the training. You can download high-res social media images [here](#).

Theme Bucket	Post (copy)	Link	Photo
CSPP – Binge Drinking	<p>People who work in construction are more likely to drink excessively. Binge drinking is one type of excessive drinking.</p> <p>A man is binge drinking when he has 5 or more standard drinks in two hours. For women, it's 4 or more drinks.</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<a href="http://www.rethinkthedrink.com">www.rethinkthedrink.com</a>	 <p><b>Binge Drinking</b> Drinks in one occasion</p> <p>Man: 5+ Woman: 4+</p> <p>CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP</p> <p>Rethink the drink</p>
CSPP – Heavy Drinking	<p>Heavy drinking can harm your health long-term. For men, that means 15 or more drinks a week. For women, it's 8 or more.</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<a href="http://www.rethinkthedrink.com">www.rethinkthedrink.com</a>	 <p><b>Heavy Drinking</b> Drinks per week</p> <p>Man: 15+ Woman: 8+</p> <p>CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP</p> <p>Rethink the drink</p>
CSPP – Binge Drinking	<p>From drinks after work with friends, to beers while fishing, to the weekend BBQ or sports games, drinking alcohol can quickly add up.</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<a href="http://www.rethinkthedrink.com">www.rethinkthedrink.com</a>	 <p>CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP</p> <p>Rethink the drink</p>

<p>CSPP – We Work Hard</p>	<p>We work hard for ourselves, our families and our communities with the jobs we all do every day.</p> <p>When we talk about suicide prevention, we can't leave out the role alcohol plays. Excessive drinking is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most preventable cause of death in the U.S.</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<p><a href="http://www.rethinkthedrink.com">www.rethinkthedrink.com</a></p>	
<p>CSPP – Serious Health Problems</p>	<p>In Oregon, 1 out of 5 adults drinks excessively – many without realizing it. This can lead to serious health problems, including cancer, liver failure, heart disease and depression.</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<p><a href="http://www.rethinkthedrink.com">www.rethinkthedrink.com</a></p>	
<p>CSPP – High Risk for Injury or Death</p>	<p>More than 2,000 people die each year from excessive alcohol use, 3 times the number who die from other drug overdoses.</p> <p>As construction workers, we're also at higher risk for injury or death when one of us comes to work hungover or under the influence of alcohol.</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<p><a href="http://www.rethinkthedrink.com">www.rethinkthedrink.com</a></p>	

<p>CSPP – Tips for Drinking Less</p>	<p>Interested in drinking less alcohol? Here are some tips:</p> <p>Count your drinks</p> <p>Track your drinks through an app</p> <p>Eat when drinking</p> <p>Make small changes in your daily life, like not keeping alcohol in your home</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<p><a href="http://www.rethinkthedrink.com">www.rethinkthedrink.com</a></p>	
<p>CSPP – Drink Calculator</p>	<p>When is one drink actually two drinks, or more? Use this drink calculator to check how many “standard drinks” are in typical servings of alcohol.</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<p><a href="https://bit.ly/3Ya47KT">https://bit.ly/3Ya47KT</a></p>	
<p>CSPP – Alcohol and Suicide</p>	<p>Irregular work hours, frequent travel away from friends and family, physical injury and alcohol use all contribute to the high rate of suicide in the construction industry.</p> <p>If you're having suicidal thoughts, call or text the #988Lifeline for help, or reach out to a trusted family member or friend.</p> <p>#RethinkTheDrink</p>	<p><a href="https://988lifeline.org">https://988lifeline.org</a></p>	<p>Call or text 988 for support</p> 

## CSPP/Rethink the Drink visuals

The following is a set of CSPP and Rethink the Drink visuals. These visuals can be used in a number of ways to enhance communications about excessive alcohol use when speaking with your employees or members. You can pick and choose what visuals make the most sense for the way you are trying to reach them.

Some examples of where these visuals can be used:

- Social media
- Company website
- Blog post or internal e-newsletter article
- Handouts/brochures for employees or members
- Health and safety presentations

You can download a high-res version of CSPP/Rethink the Drink visuals [here](#).

**Binge Drinking**  
Drinks in one occasion

Man: 5+  
Woman: 4+



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SOLUTION  
PARTNERSHIP

Rethink  
the drink

**Consumo excesivo ocasional**  
Bebidas en una misma ocasión

Hombre: 5+  
Mujer: 4+



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**Heavy Drinking**  
Drinks per week

Man: 15+  
Woman: 8+



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**Consumo perjudicial**  
Bebidas por semana

Hombre: 15+  
Mujer: 8+



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**Heavy Drinking**  
Drinks per week

Man: 15+  
Woman: 8+



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**Consumo perjudicial**  
Bebidas por semana

Hombre: 15+  
Mujer: 8+



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**Standard Drinks**

12 fl oz. (5% ABV)  
5 fl oz. (12% ABV)  
1.5 fl oz. (40% ABV)



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**Bebidas estándar**

12 fl oz. (5% ABV)  
5 fl oz. (12% ABV)  
1.5 fl oz. (40% ABV)



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**Example\* IPA**

Pint (16 fl oz.) @ 7% ABV  
= 1.9 standard drinks



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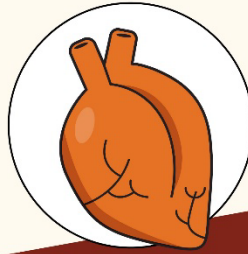
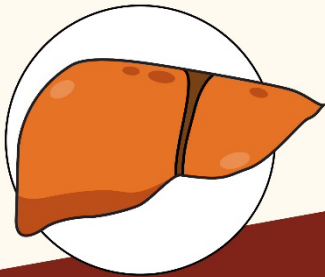
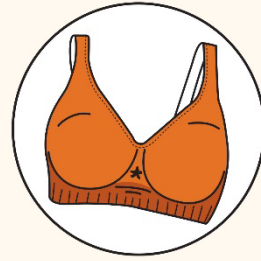
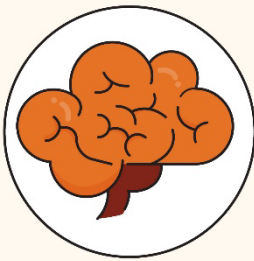
\*ABV percentage varies

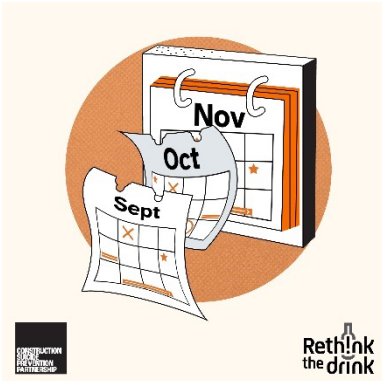


Health consequences can stack up.



Las consecuencias en la salud  
pueden acumularse.





## Poster

The following is a poster (or infographic) that can be used to share information with employees or members about excessive alcohol use. This poster is designed to be easily printed on 11" x 17" paper using a standard office printer. It can then be posted in break rooms, lunch/dining areas, human resources offices or other employee and member spaces. You can download a high-res version of this poster [here](#).

If you need a version of the poster to have it printed professionally, or if you'd like different sizes of the poster, please contact [Max Margolis](#) and [Anna Klein](#).

# People in Oregon may be drinking too much, and not realize it.

In the U.S., 1 in 5 deaths of people ages 20-49 is from excessive drinking.



Drink less, live more.



Excessive drinking can cause: prostate cancer, colon cancer, high blood pressure, strokes and heart disease, cancers of the head and neck, depression, anxiety and memory loss, breast cancer and three types of liver disease.

## Excessive drinking includes binge drinking and heavy drinking.

Excessive drinking will mean something different for each person, depending on physical and other factors such as age, medication interactions, pregnancy or gender.



You're **binge drinking** when you consume 4 to 5 drinks or more on a single occasion — at a party or restaurant, for example, or at home on your couch.



You're **heavy drinking** when you consume, on average, more than 1-2 drinks every night over the course of a week.

## What is a "standard drink?"



12 fl oz.  
(5% ABV)

5 fl oz.  
(12% ABV)

1.5 fl oz.  
(40% ABV)

## All drinks are not the same.

### Example\* IPA

Pint (16 fl oz.) @ 7% ABV  
= 1.9 standard drinks

### Example\*\* Margarita

Orange liqueur (1 fl oz.)  
+ Tequila (1.5 fl oz.)  
= 1.7 standard drinks



\*ABV percentage varies

\*\*Liquor amounts vary

Reth!nk  
the drink

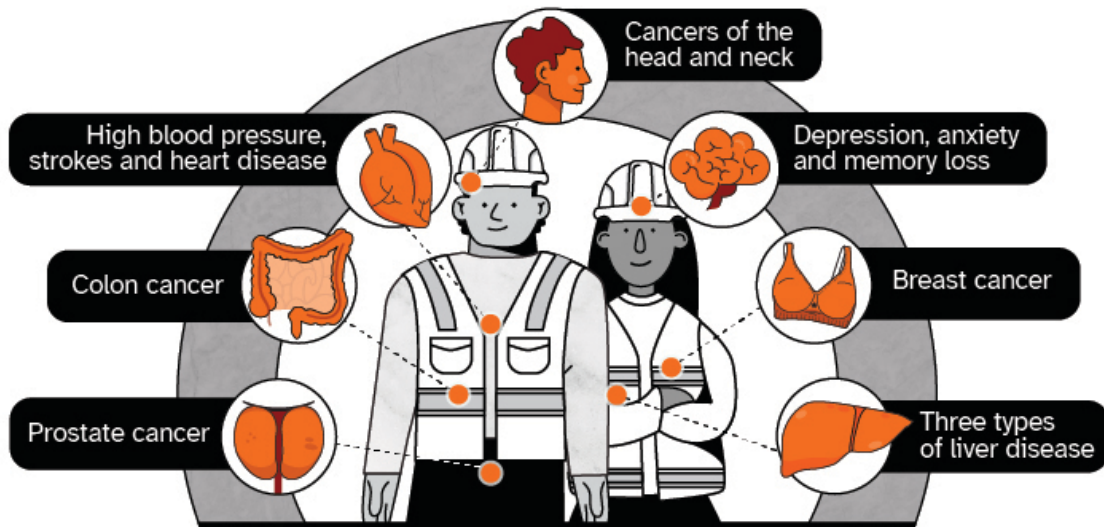
rethinkthedrink.com

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## Flyers

Similar to the poster or infographic, the following are flyers that can be used to share information about excessive alcohol use with employees or members of an organization. These graphics can be easily printed on a standard office printer or added to employee or member communications materials. They can be posted in break rooms, lunch/dining areas, human resources offices or other employee and member spaces. The flyers are much shorter than the infographic, making it easy to convey more bite-size information about excessive alcohol use. You can download high-res versions of these flyers [here](#).

# Drink less, live more.



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SUICIDE  
PREVENTION  
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Is excessive drinking affecting your health?  
Visit [rethinkthedrink.com](http://rethinkthedrink.com)

Rethink  
the drink

## What is binge drinking?



You're **binge drinking** when you consume 4 to 5 drinks or more on a single occasion — at a party or restaurant, for example, or at home on your couch.

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Is excessive drinking affecting your health?  
Visit [rethinkthedrink.com](http://rethinkthedrink.com)

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the drink

## What is heavy drinking?



You're **heavy drinking** when you consume, on average, more than 1-2 drinks every night over the course of a week.

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Is excessive drinking affecting your health?  
Visit [rethinkthedrink.com](http://rethinkthedrink.com)

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the drink

**All drinks are not the same.**

**Example\* IPA**



Pint (16 fl oz.) @ 7% ABV  
**= 1.9 standard drinks**



Is excessive drinking affecting your health?  
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the drink**

## Hardhat stickers

