



Atrium Health

Take control of Your Health

Holiday Celebrations Are Upon Us – Be Mindful of What You Drink



The holidays are a time of celebration, family traditions and mini-reunions. Alcohol often plays a role at parties and dinners, and it can be easy to drink too much. Tragically, the holidays are also one of the most dangerous times of year for alcohol-related injuries and accidents.

While it's a fun to cheer the occasion with loved ones, take steps to be safe and know your limits this holiday season.

So, what's considered safe?

Experts advise:

- Women should have no more than one drink a day
- Men should have no more than two drinks a day
 - One drink is considered 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of liquor

Here are some other tips:

- 1 Keep an eye on your pour.** One large glass of wine may, in fact, be two servings. And some cocktails are worse than others because of the amount of calories due to added sugar and fat (think eggnog and other sugary mixers).
- 2 Know your number.** Experts say it's helpful to set a limit on the number of drinks you will have before you even get to the party.
- 3 Pace yourself.** If you choose to have more than one or two drinks, spread them out. Experts suggest no more than one drink an hour.
- 4 Don't forget to eat.** Drinking on an empty stomach is never a good idea.
- 5 Water is your friend.** For every glass of wine, bubbly or other drink you have, drink a full glass of water in between to stay hydrated.
- 6 Plan ahead to get home safe.** Decide on a designated driver before the festivities start.
- 7 It's OK to say 'no.'** Just because alcohol is at most social events, doesn't mean you have to drink.

Sobering Statistics

Fatal traffic accidents involving a driver who's had too much alcohol jump up during the holidays, according to the National Institutes on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

[28%]

Earlier in December

[40%]

During the holidays

Health Benefits of Holiday Giving – The Priceless Gift of Making a Difference

The flurry of the holiday season is upon us. It's a good time to press pause and be reminded that – just as we tell our children – 'tis the season of giving. And there are many ways you can make a difference.



Here are some ideas to get you started:

- 1 Help your local food bank.** Find out what food items are most needed. Plan a special shopping trip to help them stock up. If you have kids, give them the list and watch how much they enjoy picking out food for others.
- 2 Deliver a meal.** If you know someone who lives alone, has recently lost a loved one or is ill, arrange a time to drop off a meal or a food basket if that's easier. While you're there, ask if they need help with an errand or putting up holiday decorations.
- 3 Go through your closets and toy bins.** Look for lightly used coats and/or toys and donate them.
- 4 Spread a little cheer.** Let's be honest, the hustle and bustle of the holidays can get the best of us. Take a deep breath and look for simple ways to give joy. Instead of racing to the check-out line or to grab the last parking spot, let someone go ahead of you. Write a heartfelt written note – not an email or text – to a friend who matters.

Not only will you brighten someone's day, you'll get a boost too. Research shows – and many experts say – there are some surprising health benefits from giving back. Volunteering your time and giving to others can:

- Counter stress
- Lift your spirits, lowering the likelihood of depression or the winter blues
- Help you feel more connected to others and give you a sense of fulfillment and purpose
- Lead to better mental and physical health
- Even help you live longer

So, carve out some time and decide how you can make a difference.



Celebrate December!

December 11 is National App Day. Take stock of the apps on your smartphone or other devices and get rid of those you don't use. Don't forget to tell your health care providers if you use any apps to track your health.