



Powering Healthcare for *All* of Us



CARE CONNECTION

APRIL 2026

ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF ALCOHOL ON OUR HEALTH

April is Alcohol Awareness Month—a time dedicated to increasing public understanding of alcohol use and misuse, highlighting its impact on physical and mental health, and sharing resources for prevention and support.

Alcohol consumption is common in many social settings; however, its health effects are often underestimated. Raising awareness is critical because alcohol misuse remains one of the leading preventable causes of death in the United States.



The Impact

Each year in the U.S., approximately 178,000 deaths are attributed to excessive alcohol use. In addition, more than 20,000 deaths annually are linked to alcohol-related cancers. Alcohol misuse is associated with over 200 disease and injury-related conditions, affecting nearly every organ system in the body.

These numbers highlight the importance of understanding what constitutes moderate drinking.

What Is Considered Moderate Drinking?

Moderate drinking is defined as:

- One drink or fewer per day for women
- Two drinks or fewer per day for men

It is important to note that many alcoholic beverages contain more than one standard drink. Without realizing it, individuals may consume more alcohol than intended.

Defining Excessive Alcohol Use

Excessive alcohol use refers to drinking patterns that increase the risk of harm. It includes:

- **Binge drinking:**
 - o Four or more drinks for women (on a single occasion)
 - o Five or more drinks for men (on a single occasion)
- **Heavy drinking:**
 - o Eight or more drinks per week for women
 - o Fifteen or more drinks per week for men

- **Underage drinking:** Any alcohol use by individuals under 21
- **Drinking during pregnancy:** Any alcohol use during pregnancy

These patterns significantly increase both short-term and long-term health risks.

Immediate Risks of Excessive Drinking

Drinking excessively on a single occasion can lead to serious and sometimes life-threatening consequences, including:

- Injuries, such as motor vehicle crashes, falls, drownings, and burns
- Violence, including homicide, suicide, sexual violence, and intimate partner violence
- Alcohol poisoning, where dangerously high blood alcohol levels interfere with breathing and heart rate
- Overdose, particularly when alcohol is combined with other substances like opioids
- Sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancy, often linked to impaired judgment and unprotected sex
- Pregnancy complications, including pregnancy loss, stillbirth, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)

Long-Term Health Consequences

Over time, excessive alcohol use can contribute to a wide range of chronic conditions and health complications, including:

- Cancer (mouth, throat, voice box, esophagus, breast, liver, colon, and rectum)
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Liver disease
- Stroke
- Alcohol use disorder
- Digestive problems
- Weakened immune system
- Mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety
- Learning and performance problems at school or work
- Memory impairment and dementia
- Broader social and wellness challenges

The impact extends beyond physical health, affecting families, workplaces, and communities.

Taking Steps Toward Better Health

Alcohol Awareness Month serves as a reminder that small, intentional changes can make a meaningful difference.

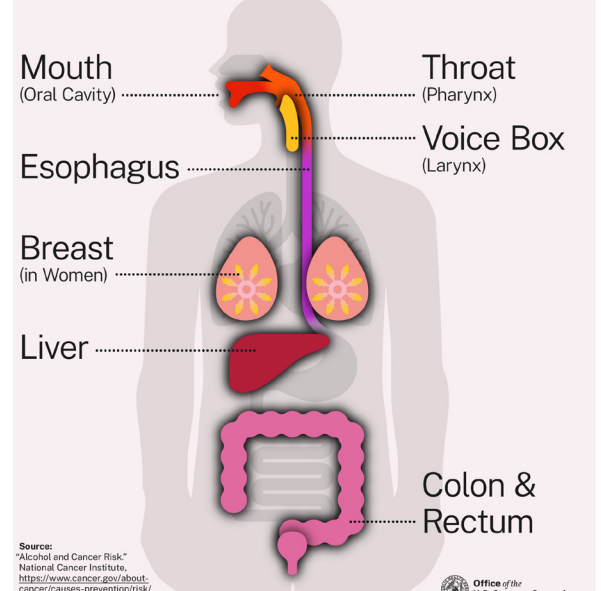
Strategies to improve overall health include:

- Moderating alcohol use
- Eliminating tobacco use
- Eating a balanced, nutritious diet
- Exercising regularly
- Getting adequate sleep
- Prioritizing mental health and well-being

For individuals who choose to drink, practical steps include:

- Avoiding situations or triggers that encourage excessive drinking
- Asking a trusted friend for accountability
- Talking openly with a healthcare provider about alcohol use
- Setting daily and weekly drinking limits and writing them down
- Tracking alcohol consumption

Consuming alcohol increases the risk of developing at least 7 types of cancer



Moving Forward

Alcohol Awareness Month is not about blame or stigma—it is about education, prevention, and empowerment. By understanding the risks associated with alcohol use and recognizing when drinking patterns may be harmful, individuals can make informed decisions that protect their health and the well-being of those around them.

Awareness Is The First Step. Action Is The Next. FMCP Support And Resources Are Available.

- **Member Assistance Program**
 - For help setting up an in-person or virtual appointment — call **1-844-509-1470**
 - For self-service appointments — visit www.anthem.com/FMCP
 - For MAP orientation video — click the *Get Started* tab
- **Anthem BCBS**
 - For help locating an in-network provider(s) — call **1-800-810-2583**
 - For self-service — visit www.anthem.com
- **Talkspace**
 - Visit www.talkspace.com/FMCP
 - Available for ages 13+

Other Available Support and Resources

If you or someone you know is concerned about alcohol use, confidential support is available:

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline**
 - Call **1-800-662-HELP (4357)** for free, confidential treatment referral and information.
- **SMART Recovery**
 - Visit <https://smartrecovery.org/> for evidence-informed support programs.
- **Alcoholics Anonymous**
 - Find local meetings at <https://www.aa.org/find-aa>.
- **National Substance Abuse Helpline**
 - Call **1-844-289-0879** for free, confidential, 24/7 support and information about treatment options and costs.

Resources: SAMHSA, CDC

WELLNESS TIP!

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE SPRING SUN

While the summer heat still feels a ways away, it's all-too-easy to underestimate the power of the sun in early spring.

You can protect yourself by:

- Wearing sunscreen and sunglasses
- Choosing sun-protectant clothing
- Finding shade at peak sun times

Source: [Melanoma Canada](http://www.melanoma.ca)

DID YOU KNOW?



FMCP MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

At the beginning of this year, FMCP launched a special Member Assistance Program (MAP), which provides members with concierge-level service 24/7/365.

Our MAP offers the following services:

- Attorney consultation and legal resources
- Confidential counseling (in-person and virtual)
- Identity theft protection
- Financial consultation and website resources
- Work-life resources (childcare, elder care, caregiver support)
- Emotional wellbeing resources

Visit <http://www.anthem.com/FMCP> or use the QR code to learn more.



Call **1-844-509-1470** for concierge-level provider locator and appointment assistance.

NATIONAL INFERTILITY AWARENESS WEEK (APRIL 19-25): REMOVING BARRIERS TO FAMILY BUILDING

Fertility and Family Building

Comprehensive fertility and family building benefits



In April we honor National Infertility Awareness Week (April 19-25), a time to raise awareness about infertility and the barriers that millions face as they build their families. One in six people globally are affected by infertility. Many in the LGBTQ+ community, as well as those choosing to be single parents, face a lack of resources when trying to build their families. NECA/IBEW Family Medical Care Plan is proud to partner with Progyny to support our members' fertility and family-building needs through personalized and comprehensive care.

Your Progyny benefit includes:

- Family planning and trying-to-conceive resources
- Financial coverage for fertility treatment (e.g., IUI, IVF, and more)
- Counseling for adoption and surrogacy
- Access to a network of top fertility specialists
- Male reproductive care
- Doctor-approved resources
- Personalized emotional support and guidance from a Progyny Care Advocate (PCA)

To learn more about your fertility and family-building benefit:

- Visit [Progyny's website](#)
- Call **833-233-0981** to connect with a PCA
- Click or scan the QR code to register for an upcoming webinar on April 21st (3-4 pm ET)



NECA/IBEW Family Medical Care Plan members and their covered spouses enrolled in an eligible Plan have access to the Progyny benefit. Personalized coaching from Progyny is available to you at no cost. Other services are subject to financial responsibility according to your medical Plan.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

PPO - Anthem

☎ 1-800-810-BLUE
(Provider locator services)
🌐 www.anthem.com

Rx Drugs - SavRx

☎ 1-866-233-4239
🌐 www.savrx.com

Dental - Delta Dental

☎ 1-855-277-4526
🌐 www.deltadentalins.com
(if applicable)

Vision - VSP

☎ 1-800-877-7195
🌐 www.vsp.com
(if applicable)



NECA/IBEW Family Medical Care Plan

☎ 1-877-937-9602
🌐 www.nifmcp.com
📍 410 Chickamauga Avenue, Suite 301
Rossville, GA 30741