

LifeMatters®

A Newsletter from Your EAP and WorkLife Service

Being Smart About Alcohol Use

For most people, an occasional alcoholic beverage when out to dinner or visiting with friends is not a concern. However, for some people, even casual drinking can lead to larger problems.

A drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits. Most experts recommend no more than one drink per day for women and two per day for men. Drinking alcohol in excess of these limits may increase the risk for a variety of health issues and increase difficulties with depression and other mental health concerns.

If you want to have an occasional drink while still maintaining a healthy lifestyle, the following guidelines may be of help:

- **Be sensible when socializing.** Limit yourself to one drink with dinner, then switch to non-alcoholic beverages. If you opt to have more than one

drink, be certain to consume a matching amount of water.

- **Never drink and drive.** If you plan to drink when you are away from home, arrange for someone to be the designated driver or take a cab.
- **Set limits.** If you have friends who are heavy drinkers, ask them to respect your choice to not drink as much as they do. You shouldn't have to apologize for choosing not to drink in excess.
- **Don't drink to avoid problems.** If you are having trouble at work or home, talk to a friend or consider seeking counseling or other professional assistance.

Over time, some people may find that they gradually begin to drink more than is healthy. Warning signs that drinking may be getting out of control include:

- Looking forward to a set time of day when you can start drinking.
- Avoiding parties or places where liquor is not served or being concerned that alcohol will not be available when you want it.
- Periodically trying to slow down or stop drinking without success or experiencing symptoms of withdrawal when you do cut back.
- Experiencing legal, financial, workplace, or family problems because of drinking.
- Friends or family members expressing concern about your alcohol use.

If you or someone you care about needs help with handling an addiction to alcohol or another drug, LifeMatters can help. Call 24/7 for confidential assistance.

The above information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to take the place of medical advice.

Source: Krames Staywell and Life Advantages



LifeMatters® services are available 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

To speak with a professional counselor, call 1-800-367-7474.

Visit **LifeMatters** on the Internet at mylifematters.com.

Language assistance services in your preferred spoken and written languages are available at no cost by calling 1-800-367-7474.