



Alcohol ABUSE

South Africa has a high per capita alcohol consumption rate, with young adults more prone to harmful drinking patterns. Excessive drinking, including binge drinking, is at times seen to be part of the normal university experience. This may often lead to abuse and addiction. While some symptoms are easy to identify, others may not be as apparent. Warning signs, no matter how minor they may seem, should be taken seriously and treated immediately. Often, family members, teachers, friends and other loved ones tend to be the first people to recognise these warning signs.

5 common reasons cited for alcohol abuse

Escaping reality | Stress | Peer Pressure | Emotional struggles | Experimenting



ACADEMIC PROBLEMS

May skip or disrupt classes, not complete readings or tasks and receive poor grades

MOOD CHANGES

including irritability, aggressiveness, anger and defensiveness

LOSS OF INTEREST IN HOBBIES AND ACTIVITIES & SWITCHING FRIENDS

Reduced interest in sports and other social activities and dramatic change in one's circle of friends

INABILITY TO CONCENTRATE OR EXPERIENCING MEMORY PROBLEMS

Alcohol can negatively impact memory and the ability to concentrate and stay focused.

CHANGE IN APPEARANCE

Alcohol breath or sometimes the neglect of hygiene and self-care



5 addiction patterns

Drinking alone
or in secrecy

Drink more,
or longer, than you plan to

Have tried to cut back
or stop more than once but couldn't

Craving alcohol
so badly you can't think of anything else

Experience of withdrawal
symptoms like difficulty sleeping, shakiness and restlessness

Other noticeable symptoms of drunkenness

Slurred speech, coordination difficulties, bloodshot eyes and flushed face, relationship problems, proneness to injury or violence, memory lapses or blackouts.

Males vs Females

5 REASONS WHY FEMALES APPEAR TO BE MORE VULNERABLE. THEY:

- Achieve higher concentrations of alcohol in the blood and become more impaired after drinking equivalent amounts of alcohol
- Are more susceptible to alcohol-related organ damage
- Although less likely to drive after drinking, studies show gender differences in how alcohol affects visual cues and driving performance
- Are more likely to become victims of violence e.g. shoving, kicking, or punching and may experience sexual assault, including date and or other forms of rape
- If pregnant, the unborn child may run the risk of developing Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)

5 consequences of alcohol abuse

INCREASE IN HEALTH RELATED CONCERNS

ACCIDENT/INJURY

VIOLENCE & GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

RAPE/SEXUAL ASSAULT

TROUBLE WITH THE LAW



Assistance

There are several screening tools that help to determine alcohol abuse. Should you feel you or someone you know needs assistance, please reach out for assistance. Whilst the CCDU doesn't directly work with Alcohol Rehabilitation Programmes, we may be able to point you in the right direction.

SOME USEFUL RESOURCES:



Alcoholics Anonymous South Africa
0861 HELPA (435 722)



Al-Anon
0861 ALANON (25 26 66)



Narcotics Anonymous SA
083 900 MY NA (083 900 69 62)



SA National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (SANCA)
08611 REHAB (73422) or
(011) 673-0400



social development
Department: Social Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Department of Social Development's Substance Abuse Line
0800 12 13 14 or
SMS 32312

REFERENCES:

- <https://www.alcoholrehabguide.org/alcohol/warning-signs/>
- <https://christiandrugsupport.wordpress.com/2017/08/30/helplines-south-africa/>
- <https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/addiction/understanding-alcohol-abuse-symptoms>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/fetal-alcohol-syndrome/symptoms-causes/syc-20352901>
- <https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/aa46.htm>

