

Avoidance of Risky Substances

It is well known that tobacco use and drinking too much alcohol increases the risk of many chronic diseases and death, which is why avoiding risky substances is so important. People who are ready can and do quit smoking; there are more former smokers in the world now than there are current smokers. Some treatments work for alcohol abuse, but treatments often take time, different approaches and many attempts. Giving yourself patience as well as getting support from others is an important part of reaching your goals.

Effective Treatment Models

- Counseling
 - Individual, group, telephone
 - Many quick visits
 - Longer more intense visits
- Medications (anti-relapse)
- Counseling plus medication is more effective

Slips and relapses are normal and considered part of the change process. Goal setting, support and persistence is key!

Goals for Avoiding Risky Substances

SMART goals guide goal setting to help plan and achieve goals. Setting goals around substance use (tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs) is a great way to start making changes. An example of a goal is, "I will swap my morning cigarette with chewing gum at least 5 days this week for the next four weeks. I will ask my partner to help keep me on track and use the free texting service for more support."

Specific - What are you going to do to decrease your substance use?

Measurable - How much will you reduce it by?

Achievable - Do you have what it takes to follow through?

Realistic - What can you actually do? (improvement over perfection)

Time-Bound - How frequent? How long will you commit?

Helpful Resources:

National Quit Link: 1-800-Quit-Now
SmokeFree.gov <https://smokefree.gov/>
nami.org

NIAAA Alcohol Treatment Navigator
alcoholtreatment.niaaa.nih.gov

NAADAC Substance Abuse Professionals
www.naadac.org

National Association of Social Workers
www.helpstartshere.org

Substance Abuse Treatment Locator
www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
www.aa.org

Moderation Management
www.moderation.org

Secular Organizations for Sobriety
www.sossobriety.org

SMART Recovery
www.smartrecovery.org

Women for Sobriety
www.womenforsobriety.org

Al-Anon Family Groups
www.al-anon.alateen.org

Adult Children of Alcoholics
www.adultchildren.org

www.psychologytoday.com/us



The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that adults of legal drinking age can choose not to drink, or to drink in moderation by limiting intake to 2 drinks or less in a day for men or 1 drink or less in a day for women, on days when alcohol is consumed.

Measurements:

One standard alcoholic drink in US:

12 oz beer

5 oz table wine

1.5 oz of 80-proof spirits

Typical Containers:

750 mL wine = 5 drinks

750 mL spirits = 18 drinks

1 L spirits = 24 drinks



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