

RESOURCES & SUPPORT

REFLECTIONS

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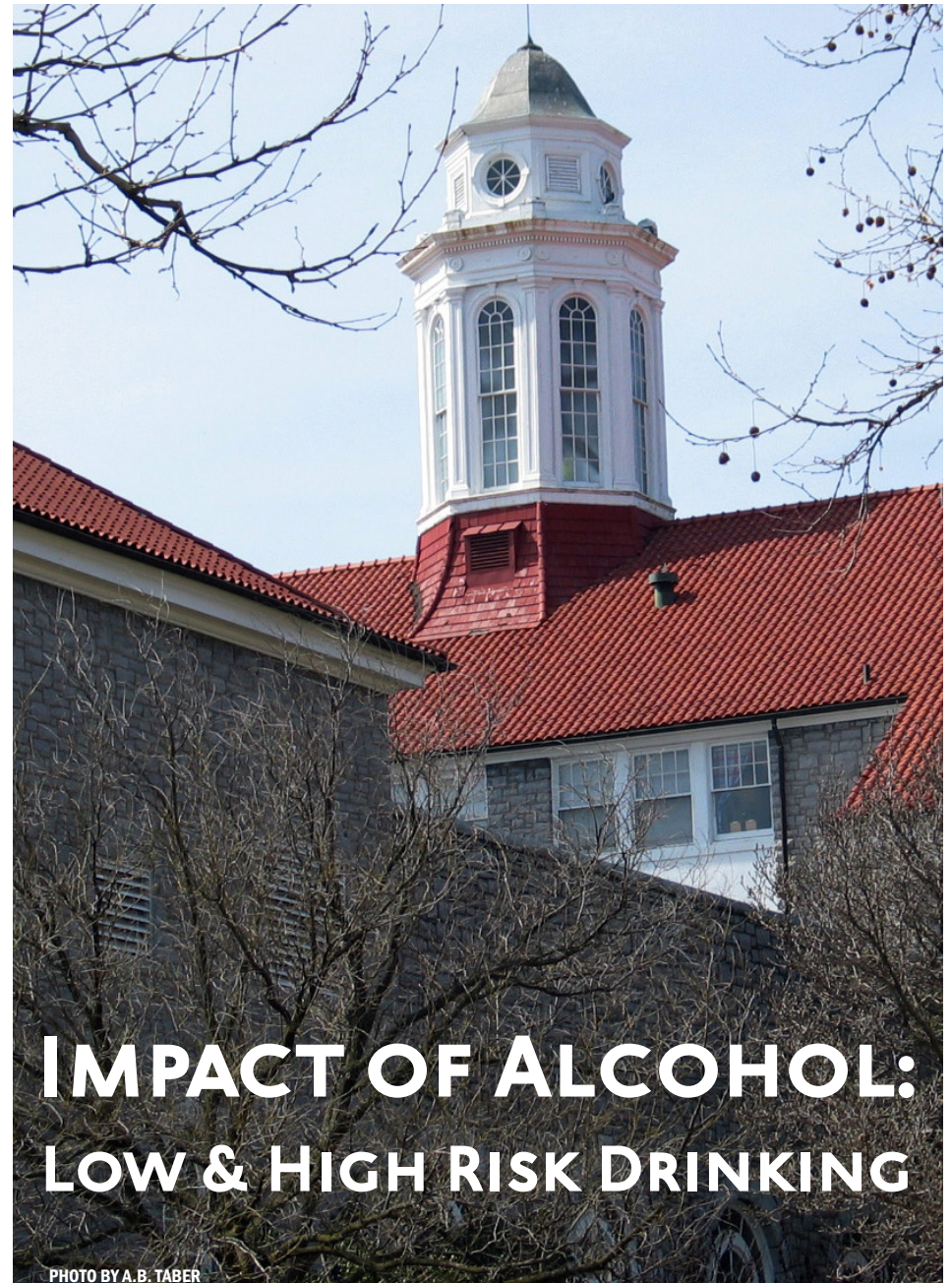


COUNSELING CENTER

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COUNSELING CENTER

WHAT IS LOW-RISK DRINKING?


JUST REMEMBER 0-1-2-3

0	1	2	3
BECAUSE ABSTAINING IS SOMETIMES NECESSARY AND DESIRED (RECOVERY, CURRENT MEDICATIONS, PREGNANCY)	THE LARGEST AMOUNT IN ONE HOUR THAT WILL NOT INCREASE RISK IS ONE DRINK.	THE LARGEST AMOUNT DAILY THAT WILL NOT INCREASE RISK FOR MOST PEOPLE.	THE LARGEST AMOUNT IN ONE DAY SOMEONE COULD DRINK THAT WOULD BE LOW-RISK

**DRINKING MORE THAN THE LIMITS ABOVE =
“HIGH-RISK DRINKING.”**

WHAT COUNTS AS A DRINK?

12 fl oz of regular beer = 8–9 fl oz of malt liquor (shown in a 12 oz glass) = 5 fl oz of table wine = 1.5 fl oz shot of 80-proof spirits (“hard liquor” — whiskey, gin, rum, vodka, tequila, etc.)



about 5% alcohol about 7% alcohol about 12% alcohol about 40% alcohol

The percent of “pure” alcohol, expressed here as alcohol by volume (alc/vol), varies by beverage.

**BINGE DRINKING = 4+ DRINKS FOR WOMEN
AND 5+ DRINKS FOR MEN IN 2 HOURS.**

STRATEGIES FOR CUTTING DOWN

- Keep track. Keep track of how much you drink. Find a way that works for you, carry drinking tracker cards in your wallet, make check marks on a kitchen calendar, or enter notes in a mobile phone notepad. Making note of each drink before you drink it may help you slow down when needed.
- Count and measure. Know the standard drink sizes so you can count your drinks accurately. Measure drinks at home. Away from home, it can be hard to keep track, especially with mixed drinks, and at times, you may be getting more alcohol than you think. With wine, you may need to ask the host or server not to “top off” a partially filled glass.
- Set goals. Decide how many days a week you want to drink and how many drinks you’ll have on those days. It’s a good idea to have some days when you don’t drink. Drinkers with the lowest rates of alcohol use disorders stay within the low-risk limits.
- Pace and space. When you do drink, pace yourself. Sip slowly. Have no more than one standard drink with alcohol per hour. Have “drink spacers”—make every other drink a non-alcoholic one, such as water, soda, or juice.
- Include food. Don’t drink on an empty stomach. Eat some food so the alcohol will be absorbed into your system more slowly.
- Find alternatives. If drinking has occupied a lot of your time, then fill free time by developing new, healthy activities, hobbies, and relationships, or renewing ones you’ve missed. If you have counted on alcohol to be more comfortable in social situations, manage moods, or cope with problems, then seek other, healthy ways to deal with those areas of your life.
- Avoid “triggers.” What triggers your urge to drink? If certain people or places make you drink even when you don’t want to, try to avoid them. If certain activities, times of day, or feelings trigger the urge, plan something else to do instead of drinking. If drinking at home is a problem, keep little or no alcohol there.
- Plan to handle urges. When you cannot avoid a trigger and an urge hits, consider these options: Remind yourself of your reasons for changing (it can help to carry them in writing or store them in an electronic message you can access easily). Or talk things through with someone you trust. Or get involved with a healthy, distracting activity, such as physical exercise or a hobby that doesn’t involve drinking.
- Know your “no.” You’re likely to be offered a drink at times when you don’t want one. Have a polite, convincing “no, thanks” ready. The faster you can say no to these offers, the less likely you are to give in. If you hesitate, it allows you time to think of excuses to go along.

WHAT ARE SYMPTOMS OF AN ALCOHOL USE DISORDER?

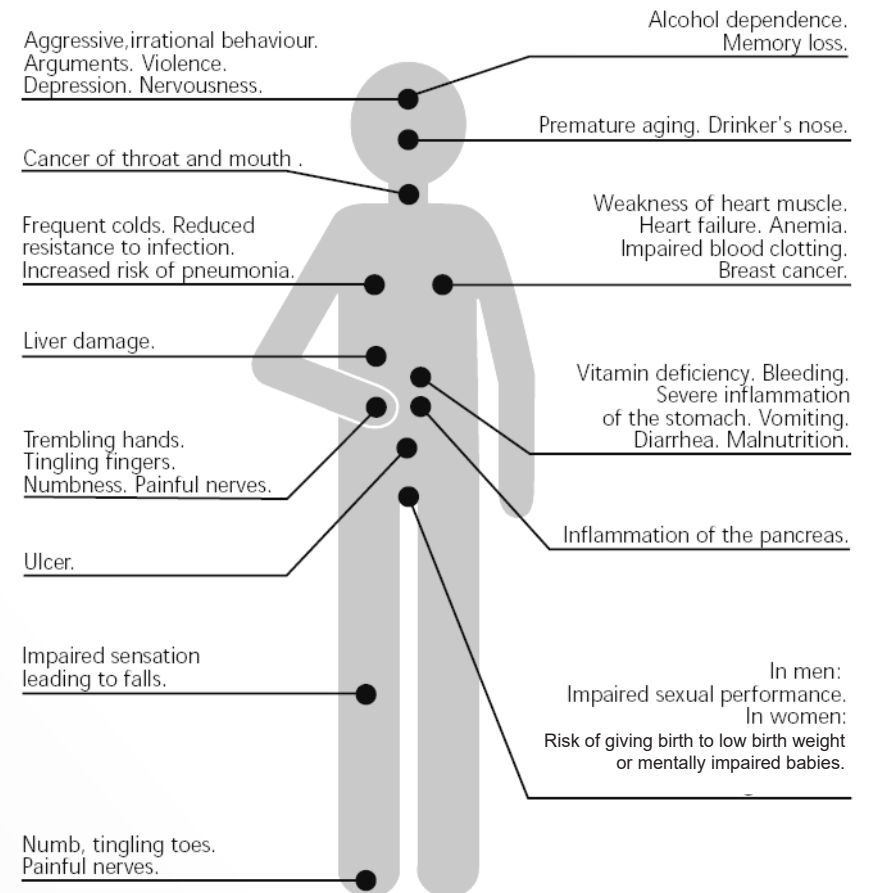
A few mild symptoms — which you might not see as trouble signs — can signal the start of a drinking problem. It helps to know the signs so you can make a change early. If heavy drinking continues, then over time, the number and severity of symptoms can grow and add up to an “alcohol use disorder.” Doctors diagnose an alcohol use disorder, generally known as alcohol abuse or alcoholism, when a patient’s drinking causes distress or harm. See if you recognize any of these symptoms in yourself. And don’t worry — even if you have symptoms, you can take steps to reduce your risks.

In the past year, have you (check all that apply):

- had times when you ended up drinking **more, or longer**, than you intended?
- more than once wanted to **cut down or stop drinking**, or tried to, but couldn’t?
- more than once gotten into situations while or after drinking that increased your chances of getting hurt (such as driving, swimming, using machinery, walking in a dangerous area, or having unsafe sex)?
- had to drink much more than you once did to get the effect you want? Or found that your usual number of drinks had much less effect than before?
- continued to drink even though it was making you feel depressed or anxious or adding to another health problem? Or after having had a memory blackout?
- spent **a lot of time** drinking? Or being sick or getting over other aftereffects?
- continued to drink even though it was causing **trouble** with your **family** or **friends**?
- found that drinking—or being sick from drinking—often **interfered with taking care** of your home or family? Or caused **job troubles?** Or **school problems?**
- given up or cut back** on activities that were important or interesting to you, or gave you pleasure, in order to drink?
- more than once gotten **arrested**, been held at a police station, or had other **legal problems** because of your drinking?
- found that when the effects of alcohol were wearing off, you had **withdrawal symptoms**, such as trouble sleeping, shakiness, restlessness, nausea, sweating, a racing heart, or a seizure? Or sensed things that were not there?

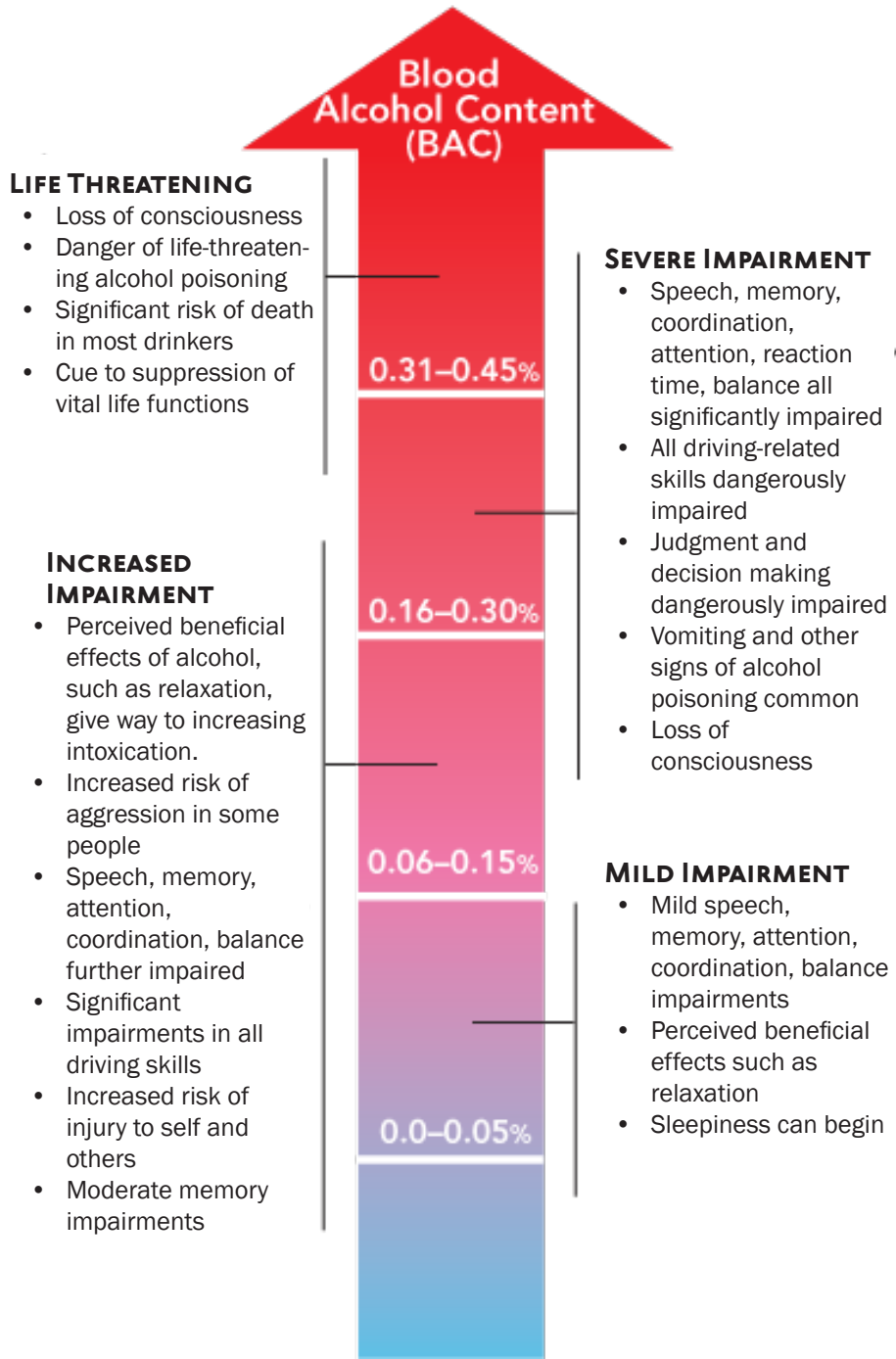
WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF HIGH-RISK DRINKING?

Effects of High-Risk Drinking



High-risk drinking may lead to social, legal, medical, domestic, job and financial problems. It may also cut your lifespan and lead to accidents and death from drunk-en driving.

AS BAC INCREASES, SO DOES RISK



WHAT IS YOUR BAC?

APPROXIMATE BLOOD ALCOHOL PERCENTAGE									
Drinks	Body Weight in Pounds								
	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240	
0	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	ONLY SAFE DRIVING LIMIT
1	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	Impairment Begins
2	.08	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03	
3	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05	Driving Skills Affected Possible Criminal Penalties
4	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.08	.07	.06	
5	.19	.16	.13	.12	.11	.09	.09	.08	Legally Intoxicated Criminal Penalties
6	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09	
7	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11	Legally Intoxicated Criminal Penalties
8	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13	
9	.34	.28	.24	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	Legally Intoxicated Criminal Penalties
10	.38	.31	.27	.23	.21	.19	.17	.16	

APPROXIMATE BLOOD ALCOHOL PERCENTAGE									
Drinks	Body Weight in Pounds								
	90	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	
0	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	ONLY SAFE DRIVING LIMIT
1	.05	.05	.04	.03	.03	.03	.02	.02	Impairment Begins Driving Skills Affected Possible Criminal Penalties
2	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.05	.05	.04	
3	.15	.14	.11	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	Legally Intoxicated Criminal Penalties
4	.20	.18	.15	.13	.11	.10	.09	.08	
5	.25	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	Legally Intoxicated Criminal Penalties
6	.30	.27	.23	.19	.17	.15	.14	.12	
7	.35	.32	.27	.23	.20	.18	.16	.14	Legally Intoxicated Criminal Penalties
8	.40	.36	.30	.26	.23	.20	.18	.17	
9	.45	.41	.34	.29	.26	.23	.20	.19	Legally Intoxicated Criminal Penalties
10	.51	.45	.38	.32	.28	.25	.23	.21	

WHAT'S THE LEGAL LIMIT IN VIRGINIA?

YOUNGER THAN 21?
.02%

21 OR OLDER?
.08%

