

EASY READING BROCHURE

Alcohol Use: It is Your Choice!

**An information brochure for adults
with low English literacy**



EASY READING



Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research is a leading-edge, registered not-for-profit charitable research and service organization that has been building the capacity of persons with disabilities and enriching communities through leadership, innovation and collaboration since 1969. Affiliated with the University of Calgary we are recognized as a leader in the field of disability services and research.

The following publication Alcohol Use: It is Your Choice! was originally written by Jeanette Coombe, The Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute, now Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research in 2007 with funding provided by the Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (now Alberta Health Services). Alcohol Use: It is Your Choice! has been updated by Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research in 2012.



© 2012 Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research

All rights reserved. The use of any part of this publication, whether it is reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means (including electronic, mechanical, photographic, photocopying or recording), without the prior written permission of Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research is an infringement of copyright law.

Disclaimer

The content of Alcohol Use: It is Your Choice! is provided for information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. No legal liability or other responsibility is accepted by or on behalf of Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research or its members, officers, employees or advisors for any errors, omissions, or statements contained in the publication. The Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research accepts no responsibility for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of reliance on the publication.

Vecova Centre for Disability Services and Research

3304, 33rd Street NW, Calgary, AB T2L 2A6

Tel: 403.284.1121 Fax: 403.284.1146

www.vecova.ca



What is an Easy Reading Brochure?

Plain language is a way of writing so that more people can understand the information. There are some things we do with plain language that you would not see out-side of plain language.

For example, words like understand and outside, used in the first paragraph, have a - in the middle. This helps to make a longer word that is made of more words, easier to read.

We also use things like square brackets and definitions:

Square Brackets []

Some-times you will see square brackets, like these [], beside a word. The letters between the brackets are there to help people learn how to say the word.

Definition Box

Some words you see will have a box around the word like "Definition Box" to the left. Beside each box, there will be a paragraph that has an line around it, like this one. This is to help people learn what the word means.

**About 79% of people over
the age of 15 drink to
some extent.**

- The ABCs of Alcohol, Alberta Health Services

You will learn about:

- **1** **What is Alcohol?**
- **2** **Do You Have a Problem with Alcohol?**
- **3** **What Happens When a Person Gets Drunk?**
- **R** **Resources**



**In Alberta, 21% of drivers
involved in fatal collisions
had consumed alcohol
before the crash.**

- Alberta Health Services

1

What is Alcohol?

Alcohol [al-ko-hall] is a drug that you drink.

The drug makes your body and mind work in a different way.

You may feel like a different person.

Other names for drinks with alcohol are booze [booz] or liquor [lick-er].

Beer, wine, cocktails [caw-ck-tails] and rum are some drinks with alcohol.

▶ Alcohol is a drug

▶ When you drink too much you have little control over what you say and do

What can Alcohol do to Your Mind and Body?

- Alcohol may first give you a good feeling
- You can get in a bad mood too
- You do not think fast and well
- You have less control over what you do or say
- It is harder to make a good choice



Do you Use Alcohol for the Wrong Reasons?

Find out why you drink alcohol.

Then think about what you can do.

Below are some reasons you may drink.

After each reason are some ideas to help you if you do not want to drink for that reason:

1. Do you drink because you want to be cool?
 - It is ok to say NO to alcohol
2. Do you drink when you meet with friends?
 - You and your friends can go to a movie
3. Do you drink because you feel sad or alone?
 - Call or meet with a friend to talk
4. Do you worry you may have a drinking problem?
 - Find help for your problem
 - You can call the Alberta Health Services: Addiction Hotline at: 1-866-332-2322



2 Do You Have a Problem with Alcohol?

Read the text below and put an **X** in the boxes that talk about you.

▶ There are right ways and wrong ways to use alcohol

▶ You should always be safe when drinking

▶ You should not drink if you are on medications, pregnant or driving

<input type="checkbox"/> I feel like myself when I drink alcohol.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do and say silly things when I drink alcohol.
<input type="checkbox"/> I have money for food and rent.	<input type="checkbox"/> I have little money to buy good food and pay my rent.
<input type="checkbox"/> I can save money for some-thing special.	<input type="checkbox"/> I owe other people money.
<input type="checkbox"/> I do a good job at work and keep my job.	<input type="checkbox"/> My boss is not happy with me. My boss tells me I may lose my job.
<input type="checkbox"/> I make good choices.	<input type="checkbox"/> When I use alcohol I make bad choices.

I use alcohol the right way.	I have a problem with alcohol.
------------------------------	--------------------------------





When is it OK to Use Alcohol?

In Alberta you need to be older than 18 years to buy or drink alcohol.

Many people have a social drink at a party. With a social drink you do not get drunk.

You know how much you can drink and be safe.

When is it NOT OK to Use Alcohol?

You should not drink if you have an illness such as diabetes [di-a-bee-teez], heart problems, or epilepsy [ep-pih-lep-see].

- Alcohol can make your illness worse
- Ask your doctor if you can use alcohol

You should not drink when you take medicine [med-dih-sin].

- This can be medicine that you get from the doctor or medicine that you buy for a headache or a cold
- Drinking when you take medicine can put you in danger or you could even die
- Talk to a doctor to see if you can drink alcohol with your medicine

You should not drink when you are pregnant [preg-nant] or want to get pregnant.

- Alcohol can give your baby a disability

You should not drink when you need to drive a car or ride your bike.



3

What Happens When a Person Gets Drunk?

Too much alcohol will make you drunk.

When you have too much to drink:

- It is hard to talk, think or walk in a normal way
- You may make a fool of your-self
- You may feel sick or you can pass out

Why Do People Drink Too Much?

If you drink alcohol, it can become a part of your life. This is called a habit [hab-it].

Some people meet with friends in the bar and then drink too much.

Other people feel lonely or sad and drink alcohol to feel better.



When Does Alcohol Become a Problem?

Some people have problems with alcohol.
They get drunk and do not keep safe.

They become an alcoholic [al-koh-hall-ick].

Alcoholic

A person who has a problem with alcohol.

Some alcoholics drink too much every day.

Others drink once in a while but when they drink they drink too much.

What can Happen if a Person has a Problem with Alcohol?

- Alcohol can hurt parts of your body like your liver or heart
- Your family and friends may stay away from you
- You may use your rent and food money to buy alcohol
 - Then you may lose the place you live in and have little food to eat
- You may be late for work or make bad choices at work
 - Your boss may fire you

If these things happen, you need to ask for help.

You can talk to friends, staff, family or a counsellor.

Resources



Alcohol Addiction Services

Alberta Health Services: Addiction Hotline

- Phone: 1-866-332-2322
- Web-site: www.albertahealthservices.ca/addiction.asp

This place can:

- Talk to you about addiction
- Give you the name of a person you can go to talk to



Alberta Health Services - Adult Alcohol Addiction Services

- Address: 2nd Floor, 1177 — 11th Ave SW
- Phone: 403-297-3071
- Fax: 403-297-3036

This place offers:

- Assessments
- Individual and group counselling
- Day programs for people who have serious problems with alcohol use

**Alberta Health Services - Youth Alcohol Addiction Services**

- Address: 1005 — 17th St NW
- Phone: 403-297-4664
- Fax: 403-297-4668

This place offers:

- Addiction and family counsellors
- Prevention services to help reduce the chances of developing addictive behaviours
- Day treatments to inform youth about substance abuse in their lives



Please think of the environment when printing this workbook.

Please print double sided.

Alcohol Use: It is Your Choice! is an information brochure developed for adults with low English literacy created by Vecova, located in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

403.284.1121

www.vecova.ca

