



EFR EMPLOYEE & FAMILY RESOURCES

ALCOHOL + YOUR LIFE



APRIL IS ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH. HOW IS ALCOHOL IMPACTING YOUR LIFE?

Discover how you can take action in decreasing the stigma around alcohol addiction treatment and recovery services in your daily life.

Founded and sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD), of which Employee & Family Resources (EFR) is an affiliate, Alcohol Awareness Month was established to help reduce the stigma often associated with alcoholism by encouraging communities to reach out the public each April with information about alcohol, alcohol use disorders, and recovery.

Whether you or someone you love is struggling with alcoholism (or exhibit behaviors that could lead to alcohol issues), help is available,

SELF-TEST

Take this [assessment](#) to help you determine if you might need to learn more about alcohol addiction.

and recovery is possible. Throughout April, keep the following in mind:

KNOW THE NUMBERS.

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, **16.3 million** American adults have an alcohol use disorder, along with the several million more who engage in risky binge drinking patterns that could lead to alcohol problems.

Unfortunately, **less than 1 out of every 10 people struggling with an alcohol use disorder** were reported to have received treatment.

Additionally, **nearly 90,000 people die** from alcohol-related causes each year, making alcohol the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States. In fact, **40 percent** of all U.S.

hospital beds are being used to treat health conditions that are related to alcohol consumption.

RETHINK "ADDICTION."

There is often plenty of confusion about alcohol use disorders and how they affect those who are struggling with them.

Some people believe these disorders are an intentional lifestyle choice, and that stopping drinking is a simple matter of making the decision to do so. However, the treatment professionals and researchers who work with alcohol use disorders on a daily basis know there's more to it than that.



Alcoholism is a type of substance addiction. This means alcoholism, like other addictions, is a chronic disease that affects the "reward, memory, and motivation systems of the brain," according to the American Society of Addiction Medicine. This leads to physical, mental, emotional, and social dysfunctions for those struggling with addiction to alcohol.

Alcoholism is also a severe alcohol use disorder, a condition where an individual is unable to control their alcohol use, is preoccupied with it, or continues to use it even when it causes problems in their life.

USE YOUR RESOURCES.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers a variety of services, free-of-charge, that can help with issues that lead to stress-induced alcohol consumption, as well as services that help employees and their family members manage alcohol use disorders.

These services include 24/7 access to legal and financial consultations, life coaching, ID theft resolution services, childcare and eldercare resources, and in-person counseling.

You or someone you know can also visit EFR for a substance use disorder evaluation and ongoing counseling outside of your EAP.

These services can all be accessed by calling **800.327.4692**, where you will receive confidential support from a masters-level clinician.

MAKE IT OK.

It's okay to ask for help. If you are struggling, you are not alone. If you know someone who is struggling, they need your support.

Alcoholism is a disease with no cure. Happily, though, it can be effectively

treated and managed. There is always a reason for hope, as millions of people are living in recovery from alcohol addiction.

On the first weekend of April, **April 5-7**, you and your loved ones are invited to participate in three alcohol-free days. Those individuals or families who experience difficulty or discomfort in this 72-hour experiment are encouraged to reach out to local resources, such as EFR or organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous, to learn more about alcoholism and its early symptoms.

This April, commit yourself to thinking differently about those who struggle with alcohol -- even if that person is yourself. After all, the stigma behind alcoholism will only continue to exist if we continue to give it that power.

WELLNESS

Fun Alcohol Alternatives



Whether you've been invited to happy hour or have been asked to stand and toast the newlyweds, alcohol is central to many pastimes and celebrations. If you are someone going through recovery or supporting someone who is, this can make for challenging and sometimes slightly awkward situations. Here are a few fun alcohol alternatives to consider:

- **Outdoor Fun:** Whether you're camping, fishing, biking, or hiking, spending time in nature is a great way to get fresh air, exercise your body, and refresh your mind.
- **Spa Day:** Practice a little self-care by indulging a spa day. This could be a bubble bath at home or a mani/pedi at the salon – you pick the pampering you need!
- **Museums/Parks/Zoo:** When was the last time you were a tourist in your hometown? Find a new or familiar place and spend time exploring.
- **Volunteer:** Get involved in a cause you support and see what a difference giving back makes in your life.
- **Day Trip:** Where can you go in a day that is new, fun, or different from the same old, same old? Sometimes the best trips are just down the road!



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