October
Alcohol Awareness
Most CMU students...

...had four or fewer drinks the last time they went out.

The pattern isn't as predictable as you think.
**HOW MUCH ALCOHOL IS TOO MUCH?**

**-What counts as one drink?-**

In the U.S., a “standard” drink contains about 0.6 fluid ounces (14 grams) of “pure” alcohol. These drinks contain about equal amounts of alcohol and each counts as one standard drink:

- 12 fl oz regular beer = ~ 5% alcohol
- 8-9 fl oz malt liquor = ~ 7% alcohol
- 5 fl oz table wine = ~ 12% alcohol
- 1.5 fl oz shot 80-proof liquor = ~ 40% alcohol

**-What is “low-risk” drinking?-**

Staying within these limits will reduce your chances of having problems from alcohol use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low-risk drinking limits</th>
<th>MEN</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>On any single DAY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No more than 4 drinks on any day</td>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
<td>No more than 3 drinks on any day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per WEEK</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No more than 14 drinks per week</td>
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<td>No more than 7 drinks per week</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*To stay low risk, keep within BOTH the single-day AND weekly limits.*

Even within these limits, drinkers can have problems if they drink too quickly or have health problems. **It’s safest to avoid alcohol if you:**

- Are under age 21
- Plan to drive a car or operate machinery
- Take medications that interact with alcohol
- Have a physical or mental condition caused or made worse by drinking
- Are pregnant or trying to become pregnant

How much do U.S. Adults drink?

Drinking patterns in U.S. adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Risk Level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>drink more than both the single-day limits and the weekly limits</td>
<td>Highest risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>drink more than either the single-day limits or the weekly limits</td>
<td>Increased risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37%</td>
<td>always drink within low-risk limits</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>never drink alcohol</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A closer look at drinking at CMU...

How much do Carnegie Mellon students drink?

In the past 30 days, on approximately how many days did you consume alcohol?

- 0 days: 42%
- 1-3 days: 21%
- 4-6 days: 18%
- 7-9 days: 8%
- 10+ days: 8%

Carnegie Mellon University, Healthy U Student Wellness Project, Fall 2013

Do you have questions or concerns about your own or someone else’s drinking? Free, confidential assessments with a health promotion specialist can be scheduled through HealthConnect, at www.cmu.edu/health-services.
Should I be concerned about a friend’s alcohol or other drug use?

Does your friend:

☐ **Neglect responsibilities because of drinking or drug use?** (Skipping out on work, school, personal or social commitments, poor grades or performance)

☐ **Use alcohol or drugs in dangerous situations?**
(While driving, mixing alcohol with prescription medications or other drugs)

☐ **Experienced repeated negative consequences while drinking or using drugs?**
(Citations, blacking out, hospitalizations, getting into fights, drunk and disorderly conduct)

☐ **Have relationship problems due to drinking or drug use?**
(Getting into fights about how they act when they drink)

☐ **Drink or use drugs to de-stress frequently?**

These are common signs of substance abuse. A "yes" to any of these questions means your friend's alcohol or drug use might be a cause for concern and you should say something.
Resources at Carnegie Mellon

University Health Services - Speak confidentially with a health promotion specialist for help with: assessing your alcohol or drug use, making healthy changes, or referrals. Schedule an appointment in HealthConnect at cmu.edu/health-services or call 412-268-2157 option 2.

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) - CAPS offers you the opportunity to talk about any personal concerns in a safe, confidential setting. Appointments can be made in person or by calling 412-268-2922.

Web Resources


www.al-anon.alateen.org - Al-Anon and Alateen: Support for those whose lives have been affected by someone else’s drinking.

www.na.org - Narcotics Anonymous: Learn about NA, if it’s for you, how it can help, and how to find local meetings.

www.aa.org - Alcoholics Anonymous: Learn about AA, if it’s for you, how it can help, and how to find local meetings.
Talking to a Friend Who’s Abusing Alcohol or Drugs

It’s not always easy—here are some tips that may help:

LEARN ABOUT SUBSTANCE ABUSE
Utilize the resources on this bulletin to educate yourself and others.

SPEAK UP AND OFFER YOUR SUPPORT
Talk to the person about your concerns, and offer your help and support, including your willingness to go with them and get help.

EXPRESS CARE AND CONCERN
Don’t wait for your friend to “hit bottom”. You may be met with excuses, denial, or anger, but be prepared to respond with specific examples of behavior that has you worried.

DON’T EXPECT THE PERSON TO STOP WITHOUT HELP
Treatment, support, and new coping skills are needed to overcome addiction to alcohol and drugs.

SUPPORT RECOVERY AS AN ONGOING PROCESS
Continue to support their participation in treatment, meetings, and recovery support groups.

Adapted from the National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence Inc. Website, 2014
SAFER DRINKING

KEEP TRACK
Keep track of how much you drink. Making note of each drink before you drink it can help you slow down.

COUNT & MEASURE
Know the standard drink sizes so you can count your drinks accurately. Mixed drinks can be hard to keep track of; watch your drink being made so you know how much alcohol is in it. Don’t drink it if you don’t know what’s in it.

KNOW YOUR “NO”
Have a polite, convincing “no, thanks” ready for times when you don’t want a drink. Responding quickly and confidently can help you stick with your decision.

INCLUDE FOOD
Don’t drink on an empty stomach. Eat before or while drinking so the alcohol will be absorbed into your system more slowly.

PACE & SPACE
When you do drink, pace yourself – sip slowly. Aim for a safer limit of one drink per hour. Make every other drink a nonalcoholic one.

SET GOALS
Before you go out, decide whether you want to drink or not. If you choose to drink, set a limit on the number of drinks you’ll have. What’s recommended? No more than 4 drinks per occasion for men and 3 drinks per occasion for women.
Recognize & Respond to an Alcohol Emergency

Call for help if someone:

- Is unable to stand or walk
- Is only poorly aware of his/her surroundings
- Has difficulty breathing or
- Is breathing slowly, with 10 seconds or more between breaths
- Is passed out/is unresponsive, or is convulsing
- Has lost control of bodily functions
- Has fever or chills
- Has cold, clammy, pale or bluish skin
- Has difficulty speaking
- Has an injury
- Is paranoid, confused, or disoriented
- Is violent or threatening
- Appears to be a risk to self or others

If you think someone needs medical attention, call for help immediately.

University Police: 412-268-2323
Off-Campus: 911