

WHAT THE ADS DON'T TELL YOU —KNOW THE FACTS

1. Young people who drink alcohol do more damage to their brains than grown-ups who drink. That's because young people's brains are still growing.
2. Alcohol damages the hippocampus, a part of the brain where learning and memory take place.
3. Heavy drinking can make it harder for a teen to learn new things, remember facts, and perform physical tasks like playing basketball.
4. A young person who drinks a lot of alcohol can damage his or her brain permanently.
5. The hippocampus of a teen who drinks heavily is about 10% smaller than a healthy teen's hippocampus.
6. Young people who drink have a higher risk of getting hooked on alcohol.
7. Scientists have found that heavy alcohol use causes brain cells to break down and die.
8. Alcohol can cause changes in feelings and emotions. Since young people are still learning to deal with feelings, alcohol can lead to problems with friends, low self-esteem, and stress.
9. In studies, young people who are heavy drinkers scored lower on tests than young people who don't drink.
10. Alcohol is a depressant drug that changes how an individual acts and feels.
12. Ethyl or ethanol alcohol is the type of alcohol in all alcoholic beverages.
13. Ethyl alcohol is a dangerous poison. Too much alcohol is deadly.
14. Some risks of binge drinking or chugging contests are acute alcohol poisoning, passing out and choking on one's own vomit.
15. Alcohol is not digested and is absorbed directly into the bloodstream. Alcohol affects every organ of the body.
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17. Alcohol has two basic effects: it irritates and sedates.
18. Long-term effects include: pancreatitis, fatty liver, cirrhosis, stomach problems and ulcers, an increased risk of cancer and heart disease, blackouts or temporary amnesia, loss of memory, and the destruction of brain cells.
19. Alcohol impairs or makes worse, messes up, ruins, or harms.
20. Alcohol slows down brain activity and interferes with basic mental, physical, and basic life support skills.
21. The brain functions first affected or impaired by drinking alcohol are mental skills such as judgment and inhibitions.
22. Alcohol use increases the risk of murder, suicide, accidental death, assault, violent acts, and other crimes.



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23. Alcohol adversely affects muscle function, reaction time, eyesight, coordination, balance, depth perception, and night vision.
24. Alcohol use increases the risk of car crashes, falls, drownings, and boating and aviation accidents.
25. In Utah, a person is considered legally drunk with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08. However, even one drink can affect an individual's ability to drive.
26. A BAC of .30 or higher may result in unconsciousness, coma, or even death.
27. The liver oxidizes or filters most of the alcohol out of the body at a slow fixed rate. Drinking coffee or taking a cold shower will not speed up this process or quicken sobriety. Letting time pass is the only way to sober up.
28. More than 100,000 Americans lose their lives each year as a direct consequence of alcohol use.
29. More than 50% of all teenage deaths, including the three leading causes of teenage death (suicide, accidents, and murder), are alcohol-related.
30. People who drink at an earlier age have a greater risk of developing alcohol-related problems.
31. Nearly 14 million people in United States—1 in every 13 adults—abuse alcohol or are alcoholics.
32. Alcoholism is a disease. There is no cure for alcoholism, but it can be treated. When supported in treatment, many alcoholics are able to stop drinking and rebuild their lives.
33. If you have alcoholism in your family, you have a greater risk of becoming an alcoholic.
34. Ala-Teen offers support to teens who have alcoholic friends and family members.
35. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is a group of irreversible birth abnormalities that are a direct result of the mother drinking during pregnancy. There is no safe level of alcohol during pregnancy.
36. Alcohol abuse doesn't just affect the person drinking, it affects our society as a whole.
37. There is approximately the same amount of ethyl alcohol in a can of beer, a glass of wine, and a one-ounce shot of whiskey.
38. It takes approximately the same number of hours as the number of drinks consumed for one to be sobered completely.
39. Much of the advertising for alcohol is specifically aimed at youth, particularly those in their teens and early 20s.

Sources: Fackelmann, Kathleen. "Teen drinking, thinking don't mix." USA Today, online article, October 17, 2000.

Wurthrich, Bernice. "Getting Stupid." Discover, Volume 22, No. 3, March 2001.