

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Alcohol Use: Where Do I Stand?

SmartHealth Challenge Summer 2016

Do you enjoy a drink now and then? Many adults drink in moderation and there's no need to worry. How much is too much though? If you drink alcoholic beverages, even occasionally, get the facts about alcoholism. Check out the resources to learn about the signs and symptoms of alcohol and also what to look for in the workplace.

For those interested, take an alcohol use assessment. If you are concerned about your alcohol use, take action. Contact your Employee Assistance Program for confidential help and assistance. **1-877-313-4455**.

There are a lot of misconceptions about what the signs/symptoms of a drinking problem looks like. The link below provides good information about what to watch for if you are concerned about your own use or the use of someone you care about.
<http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Default.aspx>

Here's where you can evaluate your drinking, decide whether and how to make a change, and find tools to help you stay in control.

<http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/Tools/Interactive-worksheets-and-more/Default.aspx>

Alcohol: Signs to Look for in the Workplace

Leave and Attendance

- Unexplained or unauthorized absences from work
- Frequent tardiness
- Excessive use of sick leave
- Patterns of absence such as the day after payday or frequent Monday or Friday absences
- Frequent unplanned absences due to "emergencies" (e.g., household repairs, car trouble, family emergencies, legal problems)

The employee may also be absent from his or her duty station without explanation or permission for significant periods of time.

Performance Problems

- Missed deadlines
- Careless or sloppy work or incomplete assignments
- Production quotas not met

- Many excuses for incomplete assignments or missed deadlines
- Faulty analysis

In jobs requiring long-term projects or detailed analysis, an employee may be able to hide a performance problem for quite some time.

Relationships at Work

- Relationships with co-workers may become strained
- The employee may be belligerent, argumentative, or short-tempered, especially in the mornings or after weekends or holidays
- The employee may become a "loner"

The employee may also have noticeable financial problems evidenced by borrowing money from other employees or receiving phone calls at work from creditors or collection companies.

Behavior at Work

The appearance of being inebriated or under the influence of alcohol might include:

- The smell of alcohol
- Staggering, or an unsteady gait
- Bloodshot eyes
- Smell of alcohol on the breath
- Mood and behavior changes such as excessive laughter and inappropriate loud talk
- Excessive use of mouthwash or breath mints
- Avoidance of supervisory contact, especially after lunch
- Tremors
- Sleeping on duty

These signs can be indicative of many things not just the possibility of alcohol abuse. However, when there are performance and conduct problems coupled with any number of these signs, it is time to make a referral to the EAP for an assessment so that the employee can get help if it is needed.

Contact EAP: 877-313-4455 / eap.wa.gov

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