

Alcohol

- is a drug
 - causes changes in person's body/behavior
- is a powerful depressant
 - slows brain/body reactions
- most widely abused drug among high school students
 - "everybody's drinking" ???
 - million of teens are refusing to drink

Influencing Factors

- stress
- advertising
- peer/social pressures
- attitudes of family/friends about alcohol consumption

Effects of alcohol on mind & body

- Intoxication happens with first drink
- Alcohol not digested but absorbed into bloodstream
(bloodstream =all body parts affected)
- Brain= effects attention, memory, inhibitions, judgment, speech, vision, coordination, heart rate, breathing
- Reflexes = slows down reaction time
- Body temperature= blood vessels relax=more blood to skin surface=feel warm but internal body temp. is decreasing=dangerous especially in cold weather
- Body fluids= prevents hormone control of urine production=body fluids depleted=thirsty= dangerous to drink on very hot days or when exercising heavily
- (pg 381 = diagram)

Characteristics of a drinking problem

- 3+ drinks/day = heavy drinker
- 5+drinks/day=excessive drinker
- drinking is a necessity to function, an obsession
- experience blackouts (can also happen with a first time drinker)
- drink alone
- hide it
- feel uncomfortable socially without it
- frequent hangovers
- rely on alcohol for stressful situations
- drink at risk or inappropriate times

Blood Alcohol Concentration

- the effects of alcohol depends on amount circulating through a person's bloodstream
- BAC = amount of alcohol in bloodstream, expressed in %
- 0.1% = one-tenth of 1%
- (page 382-383)

Factors that affect BAC

- rate of consumption
- gender
- body size
- amount of food in stomach

Drinking and Driving

- 40% of fatal motor vehicle crashes are alcohol-related
- underage drinkers more likely to cause crash: impairs driving skills, lack of experience
- DWI = BAC exceeds legal limit of 0.08
- Zero-tolerance laws = penalties are stricter for underage drivers

Binge drinking and risks

- binge = drinking large amounts of alcohol in short period of time
- minors, college students
- lower tolerance = increase risks
- alcohol poisoning
- blackouts more likely

Mixing alcohol and drugs

- alcohol increases effects of other drugs
- effects senses, decision making skills
- disrupts heart & liver functions
- increase rate of irreversible coma and death
- "multiplier effect"

Long term effects of alcohol on the body

- BRAIN – shrinks, memory, judgment, concentration, intelligence, depression, suicide
 - can cause permanent learning problems
- HEART

- weakens muscles
- scar tissue builds up
- increase risk of high blood pressure, stroke, heart attack, heart disease
- LIVER
 - disrupts ability to breakdown fat
 - fat collects in liver
 - destroys liver cells = liver failure
 - cirrhosis = scarring of liver, dead cells
 - hepatitis = caused by large amounts of alcohol
- MOUTH & THROAT
 - damaged tissue
 - increase risk of cancer
- STOMACH & INTESTINES
 - irritates lining
 - causes indigestions & ulcers
 - malnutrition

Alcoholism

- Disease or drinking behavior?
- inability to control drinking or learned behavior
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Methods of Recovery

- 1st step = admit to problem
- support groups = most effective
 - AA=alcoholics anonymous
 - Al-Anon or Alateen = for families
- individual counseling
 - understand self and behavior patterns
 - help increase self esteem
- drug therapy
 - Antabuse
 - blocks enzymes enabling body to process alcohol = feel sick
 - drinking becomes associated with feeling sick
 - not permanent solution
- detoxification
 - rids body of alcohol
 - supervised withdrawal symptoms at clinic/hospital
 - nutrition program followed

Techniques to avoid drinking

- firm "NO THANKS"
- keep it brief, you don't need to give a reason
- command respect = be firm and confident
- don't criticize others for drinking
- be the DD (designated driver)