



Dear Patient,

The transition from childhood to adulthood can be an exciting and overwhelming time, filled with new adventures and life changes. Here at Longwood Pediatrics, we want to help make your transition to adulthood as seamless as possible. We highly value you, our adolescent patients, and your families, and we enjoy being a part of your medical care.

As part of our commitment to you, we will continue to provide comprehensive, quality care until you transition out of our practice and into an adult medical home. As an adult patient in our practice, we expect to see you at least once a year for your annual physical, which is very important to maintaining optimal health. At these exams, we not only assess your current health care needs, but we also address healthy lifestyle issues that will affect your overall health in the future.

Therefore, we ask that if you choose to remain a patient at Longwood Pediatrics at this time, you must commit to a wellness exam annually; if you are a college student, we will do all that we can to accommodate your break schedule. If you feel you are ready to transition to adult medical care, we would be happy to help you with this process.

We consider it a privilege to care for you and your family.

Sincerely,

Drs. Ryan, Michaels, Young, Vernacchio, Menzin, Binney, Koppenheffer, O'Connor, Manion, Kellam, and Shearer

**Please check which you prefer at this time, print and sign your name, and hand to the office staff:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I am going to continue being a patient at Longwood Pediatrics at this time. I commit to return in one year for my annual well checkup.

\_\_\_\_\_ I plan to transition out of Longwood Pediatrics at this time. I would like to sign a medical release form for my records to be transferred.

Patient name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Patient DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Why is age of first use of alcohol so critically important?

Kids who start drinking alcohol before age 15 are 5 times more likely to develop alcohol abuse or dependence than people who first used alcohol at age 21 or older. A study published in the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* showed that 47% of those who began drinking before age 15 experienced alcohol dependence at some point in their life, compared to 9% percent of those who began drinking at age 21 or older.

### Can you get addicted even though you only do it once in a while?

YES. For most, addiction to alcohol and drugs is a process -- not an event. Most people who use alcohol and drugs do so with an intention of only using once or "once in a while." No one decides that they want to become addicted to alcohol and drugs. But, we are dealing with addictive drugs that directly affect the brain. It is easy for occasional use to change to frequent use or constant use -- that is addiction. The only thing we know for sure: if you don't drink alcohol and don't do drugs, you definitely won't become addicted.

### Does marijuana use lead to the use of other drugs?

While most marijuana smokers do not go on to use other illegal drugs, long-term studies of high school students show that few young people use other illegal drugs without first using marijuana. Using marijuana puts people in contact with people who are users and sellers of other drugs and are more likely to be exposed to and urged to try other drugs.

### Why do some people become addicted, while others don't?

Risk factors for becoming addicted to alcohol and drugs, like other conditions and diseases, vary from person to person. But, the common risk factors include: 1. Genetics--your family history; 2. Age when you start using alcohol or drugs; 3. Family (including abuse, neglect and traumatic experiences in childhood) and Social Environment (including access to alcohol and drugs), and 4. Types of drugs used.

### Should I be concerned about prescription drugs when the "real problem" is the illegal drugs like cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine?

As a teen you should be concerned about alcohol and all of the other drugs, legal and illegal. Recently there has been a significant increase in the non-medical use of prescription pain drugs among young people. In fact, after marijuana, the next three most commonly used drugs are the non-medical use of prescription pain medications: Vicodin, OxyContin and Adderall.

### I think prescription drugs might help me feel better. Is it OK to use them once in a while?

You or your friends might think that prescription drugs are safer than alcohol or illegal drugs because doctors prescribe them. But, these drugs can be just as dangerous. When prescription drugs are used without a prescription they can be as dangerous as alcohol or illegal drugs. You can die from abusing prescription drugs . . . even the first time.

### I thought drinking and driving was the only alcohol-related risk for college students?

An estimated 1,900 young people under the age of 21 die each year from alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes. And, approximately 600,000 college students are unintentionally injured while under the influence of alcohol. Approximately 700,000 students are assaulted by other students who have been drinking and about 100,000 students are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape (from NCADD Fact Sheet: Facts About Underage Drinking).

### What drugs are the most commonly abused?

Each year, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) tracks drug use trends among high school students (8th, 10th and 12th grades) through the Monitoring the Future Study (MTF). The following is a list of the most commonly abused drugs among 12th graders, starting with the most frequent: marijuana, Adderall, Vicodin, tranquilizers, cough medicine, sedatives, hallucinogens, MDMA/ecstasy, OxyContin, cocaine, salvia and Ritalin.

### Can a person be too young to become addicted to alcohol and drugs?

No. And, research and experience show that the younger someone starts using alcohol and drugs, the greater the chance that they will become addicted.

### Marijuana is just a plant... is it really that dangerous?

Yes, marijuana is a plant but it has very real health consequences, including drug

addiction. While some people think marijuana is a “harmless drug,” actual experience and the real science show a different reality. More teens are in treatment with a primary diagnosis of marijuana dependence than for all other illegal drugs combined.

### How do I know if I or someone close to me is addicted to alcohol or drugs?

The short answer -- if you or someone close to you is having a problem with alcohol or drugs and they continue to use, it's time to get help. Continued use, despite negative consequences, is a powerful indicator of addiction. To learn more, visit Friends and Family, Signs and Symptoms.

### What is a “standard drink” of alcohol?

A standard alcohol drink contains about 14 grams of pure alcohol (0.6 ounces):

12-ounces of Beer or Cooler

8-ounces of Malt Liquor

5-ounces of Wine

1.5-ounces or “shot” of Distilled Spirits/Liquor (e.g., rum, gin, vodka, or whiskey).

Note: These are approximate, as different brands and types of alcoholic beverages vary in their actual alcohol content.

### How does alcohol leave the body?

Once absorbed into the bloodstream, the Kidneys eliminate 5% of alcohol in the urine, the Lungs exhale 5% of alcohol (detectable by breathalyzer) and the Liver breaks down the remaining 90% of alcohol. Alcohol is broken down (metabolized) by the liver at the average rate

of one standard drink per hour and nothing can speed this up, including drinking coffee.

though no one in their family has a drinking or drug problem.

## Are alcoholism and drug addiction genetically inherited?

Research shows that the risk for developing alcoholism and drug addiction runs in families. But just because there is a genetic predisposition doesn't mean that the child of an alcoholic or addicted parent will automatically become alcoholic or addicted. Not all children of alcoholic or addicted parents get into trouble with alcohol and drugs. And some people develop alcoholism and addiction even

## Can alcoholism and drug addiction be treated?

Yes, alcoholism and addiction can be treated. Alcoholism and addiction treatment programs can help a person stop drinking and using drugs. Treatment has helped millions of people stop drinking and drugging, rebuild their lives and live a life in long-term recovery.

### Helpful addiction resources:

#### **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

National Drug Information Treatment and Referral Hotline, available 24/7  
800-662-HELP (4357) (toll free)  
<http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov>

#### **National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD)**

HOPE LINE: (800) NCA-CALL (24-hour Affiliate referral)  
<http://www.ncadd.org>

#### **Join Together**

Partnership for Drug-Free Kids  
<http://www.drugfree.org/join-together/>

#### **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism**

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov>  
<http://teens.drugabuse.gov/>





## Alcohol Overdose: The Dangers of Drinking Too Much

Celebrating at parties, cheering a favorite sports team, and simply enjoying a break from work are common activities throughout the year. For some people, these occasions also may include drinking—even drinking to excess. And the results can be deadly.

Although many people enjoy moderate drinking, defined as 1 drink per day for women or 2 for men, drinking too much can lead to an overdose. An overdose of alcohol occurs when a person has a blood alcohol content (or BAC) sufficient to produce impairments that increase the risk of harm. Overdoses can range in severity, from problems with balance and slurred speech to coma or even death. What tips the balance from drinking that has pleasant effects to drinking that can cause harm varies among individuals. Age, drinking experience, gender, the amount of food eaten, even ethnicity all can influence how much is too much.

Underage drinkers may be at particular risk for alcohol overdose. Research shows that people under age 20 typically drink about 5 drinks at one time.<sup>1</sup> Drinking such a large quantity of alcohol can overwhelm the body's ability to break down and clear alcohol from the bloodstream. This leads to rapid increases in BAC and significantly impairs brain function.

As BAC increases, so do alcohol's effects—as well as the risk for harm. Even small increases in BAC can decrease coordination, make a person feel sick, and cloud judgment. This can lead to injury from falls or car crashes, leave one vulnerable to sexual assault or other acts of violence, and increase

### Identifying Alcohol Poisoning

#### Critical Signs and Symptoms of Alcohol Poisoning

- » Mental confusion, stupor, coma, or inability to wake up
- » Vomiting
- » Seizures
- » Slow breathing (fewer than 8 breaths per minute)
- » Irregular breathing (10 seconds or more between breaths)
- » Hypothermia (low body temperature), bluish skin color, paleness

12 fl oz of  
regular beer



about 5%  
alcohol

=

8–9 fl oz of  
malt liquor  
(shown in a  
12 oz glass)



about 7%  
alcohol

=

5 fl oz of  
table wine



about 12%  
alcohol

=

1.5 fl oz shot  
of 80-proof  
distilled spirits  
(gin, rum, tequila,  
vodka, whiskey, etc.)



40% alcohol

The percent of "pure" alcohol, expressed here as alcohol by volume (alc/vol), varies by beverage.

Although the "standard" drink amounts are helpful for following health guidelines, they may not reflect customary serving sizes. In addition, while the alcohol concentrations listed are "typical," there is considerable variability in alcohol content within each type of beverage (e.g., beer, wine, distilled spirits).

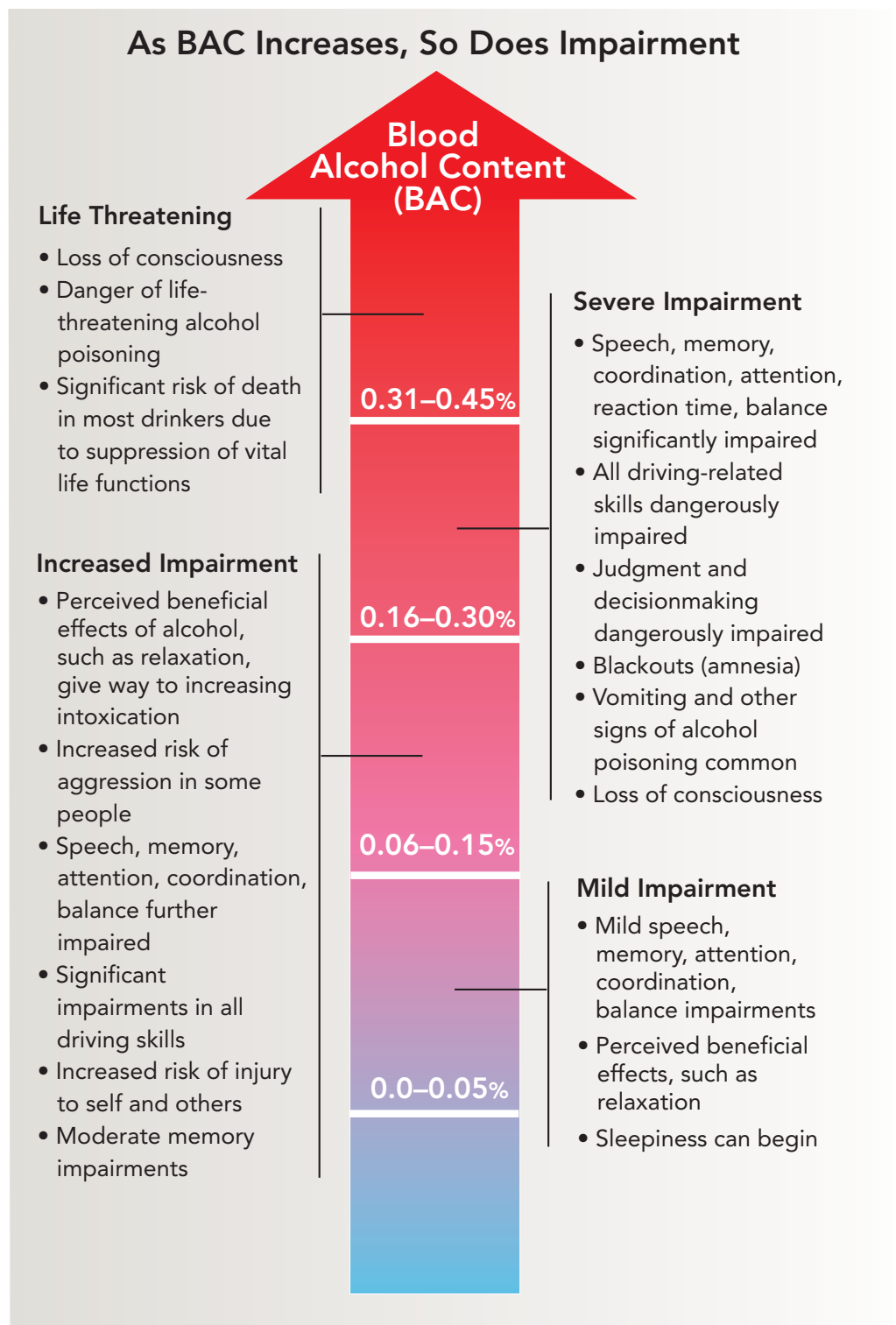
the risk for unprotected or unintended sex. When BACs go even higher, amnesia (or blackouts) can occur.

Continuing to drink despite clear signs of significant impairments can result in a potentially deadly type of overdose called alcohol poisoning. (See the table for tips on identifying alcohol poisoning.)

Alcohol poisoning occurs when there is so much alcohol in the bloodstream that areas of the brain controlling basic life-support functions—such as breathing, heart rate, and temperature control—begin to shut down. Symptoms of alcohol poisoning include confusion; difficulty remaining conscious; vomiting; seizures; trouble with breathing; slow heart rate; clammy skin; dulled responses, such as no gag reflex (which prevents choking); and extremely low body temperature.

BAC can continue to rise even when a person is unconscious. Alcohol in the stomach and intestine continues to enter the bloodstream and circulate throughout the body.

It is dangerous to assume that an unconscious person will be fine by sleeping it off. Alcohol acts as a depressant, hindering signals in the brain that control automatic responses such as the gag reflex.





Alcohol also can irritate the stomach, causing vomiting. With no gag reflex, a person who drinks to the point of passing out is in danger of choking on vomit, which, in turn, could lead to death by asphyxiation. Even if the drinker survives, an alcohol overdose can lead to long-lasting brain damage.

If you suspect someone has alcohol poisoning, get medical help immediately. Cold showers, hot coffee, or walking will not reverse the effects of alcohol overdose and could actually make things worse.

At the hospital, medical staff will manage any breathing problems, administer fluids to combat dehydration and low blood sugar, and flush the drinker's stomach to help clear the body of toxins.

The best way to avoid an alcohol overdose is to drink responsibly if you choose to drink.

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans,<sup>2</sup> moderate alcohol consumption is defined as up to 1 drink per day for women and up to 2 drinks per day for men. Know that even if you drink within these limits, you could have problems with alcohol if you drink too quickly, have health conditions, or take medications. If you are pregnant or may become pregnant, you should not drink alcohol.

Heavy or at-risk drinking for women is the consumption of more than 3 drinks on any day or more than 7 per week, and for men it is more than 4 drinks on any day or more than 14 per week. This pattern of drinking too much, too often, is associated with an increased risk for alcohol use disorders. Binge drinking for women is having 4 or more drinks within 2 hours; for men, it is 5 or more drinks within 2 hours. This dangerous pattern of drinking typically results in a BAC of .08% for the average adult and increases the risk of immediate adverse consequences.

#### What Should I Do If I Suspect Someone Has Alcohol Poisoning?

- » Know the danger signals
- » Do not wait for someone to have all the symptoms
- » Be aware that a person who has passed out may die
- » If you suspect an alcohol overdose, call 911 for help

#### What Can Happen to Someone With Alcohol Poisoning That Goes Untreated?

- » Choking on his or her own vomit
- » Breathing that slows, becomes irregular, or stops
- » Heart that beats irregularly or stops
- » Hypothermia (low body temperature)
- » Hypoglycemia (too little blood sugar), which leads to seizures
- » Untreated severe dehydration from vomiting, which can cause seizures, permanent brain damage, and death

**For more information, please visit: [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov).**

<sup>1</sup> Chen, C.M.; Yi, H-y.; and Faden, V.B. *Surveillance Report No. 101: Trends in Underage Drinking in the United States, 1991–2013*. Rockville, MD: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2015. Available at: <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/surveillance101/Underage13.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010*. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Washington, DC: USDA and HHS, 2010, p. 31. Available at: <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2010/DietaryGuidelines2010.pdf>.



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## E-Cigarettes

### What are E-Cigarettes?

E-Cigarettes, JUULS, vapes, vape pens, dab pens, mods or tanks are electronic devices that use a battery to aerosolize a liquid which is then inhaled. This liquid usually contains nicotine, chemicals, flavors and other additives. These electronic devices can also be used to deliver marijuana and other substances. The use of these devices has increased rapidly and they are now more common than traditional cigarettes among middle and high school students.

### Why are they harmful?

**Nicotine:** Many people may not know that the liquid used in these electronic devices usually contains nicotine. A single JUUL pod contains as much nicotine as a pack of 20 regular cigarettes! Nicotine in any form is not safe for youth as it is highly addictive, can harm the developing brain and affect memory and concentration. Nicotine use may also increase risk for certain mood disorders and negatively affect impulse control. E-cigarette use is strongly associated with other tobacco products like regular cigarettes.

**Other chemicals:** The liquid used in these electronic devices may contain chemicals including flavorants like Diacetyl (a chemical linked to serious lung disease), volatile organic compounds, and heavy metals like tin and lead. Heavy metals can cause respiratory distress and disease. Other chemicals in the e-liquids and in the aerosol from e-cigarettes are known to cause cancer in humans.

Some e-cigarettes have also exploded and hurt or burned people.

### Impact on others:

The cloud created by e-cigarettes can be harmful to others. The e-liquid and e-cigarettes can also be extremely harmful to infants and young children if swallowed or handled incorrectly.

### Further resources:

E-cigarettes.SurgeonGeneral.Gov

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/tobacco/Pages/Facts-For-Parents-About-E-Cigarettes-Electronic-Nicotine-Delivery-Systems.aspx>

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