

## Alcoholism

Alcoholism is defined as an addiction to the consumption of alcoholic liquor or the mental illness and compulsive behavior resulting from alcohol dependency. In simple terms, alcoholism is drinking alcohol to excess frequently. We should care about alcoholism because, even in small schools like Eureka, it can become a problem for you or one of your friends. This article will cover [general information](#), [signs and symptoms](#), [resources for students](#), and [school policies](#).

### General Information

Alcoholism is a major problem with college students nationwide. Moderate drinking for people over 21 is two drinks per day for males and one drink per day for females. Binge drinking, defined as having 5 or more drinks per occasion, is considered dangerous. Typically, at a party with alcohol students drink more than that. A lot of students think that drinking makes it easier to meet other people and have more fun. This is not the case.

In an interview with Eureka College professor, Dr. Kaiser, she said that alcoholism is based on the social-cultural environment students are placed in. With the changes students are going through, adjusting to college life, they want to fit in and form friendships. This, combined with the freer environment and easy access to alcohol led some students into alcoholism. Other factors that play a role in drinking problems are where students live, the characteristics of the schools, pre-established drinking patterns, and genetics. The campus itself plays a major factor in whether or not the students are susceptible to alcoholism. Schools who are majorly based on sororities, fraternities, or sports are more likely to have high rates of drinking problems.

College drinking comes with high risks. On average 1,825 students aged 18-24 die from alcohol related injuries. In addition to that 599,000 students are injured, 696,000 have been assaulted, and 97,000 have been sexually abused (Hingson et al., 2009). Not only is there physical and emotional damage from drinking, but there is internal damage as well. Drinking alcohol effects almost every organ in your body. Prolonged heavy drinking could cause irreversible damage to your body. Your brain is effected by alcohol, causing your neurotransmitters to relay information too slowly, this causes you to feel tired. This also causes mood and behavioral changes. Heavy drinking weakens your heart muscles and causes kidney disease. Alcoholism also effects your stomach, lungs and pancreas. The most commonly known organ to be effected is the liver. Your liver is one of the most important organs in your body. Due to alcoholism, over 2 million Americans have liver disease. (Interactive body n.d.) On top of the health and safety issues, alcoholism causes more problems in students' lives. Twenty-five percent of students reported having academic problems due to their drinking and 110,000 students are arrested, on average, for alcohol related incidents. Drinking to excess is not worth it, in many ways.

### Signs and Symptoms

- Not being able to quit drinking or control how much you drink
- Needing to drink more to feel the same effect
- Feeling sick to your stomach, sweaty, shaky, or anxious when you stop drinking
- Giving up other activities so you can drink
- Trying to quit drinking or cut back, but not being able to
- Continuing to drink even though drinking causes you problems
- Trying to hide your drinking from others
- Having blackouts, where you don't remember what happened while drinking
- Having friends and family be concerned about your drinking
- Keep alcohol in unlikely places at home, at work or in your car
- Gulp drinks, order doubles or become drunk intentionally to feel good, or drink to feel "normal"

- Have legal problems or problems with relationships, employment or finances due to drinking
- Lose interest in activities and hobbies that used to bring you pleasure

(<http://maketheconnection.net/conditions/problems-with-alcohol?gclid=CN-T-JSoxboCFStgMgod4I4ACQ>)

Any combination of the following can put you or friends in a category of an alcoholic, and getting help early is resourceful. Remember, however, that it is never too late to fix the problem.

### Resources for Students

Never be scared to ask for help if you become a victim of this substance. Reaching out for help can help you distinguish between responsible use and abuse or addiction. Being informed about alcoholism is essential, so you can make reasoned decisions about what you put in your body.

SPRUCE-Students Promoting Responsibility, Understanding, and Care, Everyday (Eureka College) [spruce@eureka.edu](mailto:spruce@eureka.edu)

John R. Day & Associates (Eureka College Counseling Services)

<http://www.christianpsychological.org>

(309) 692-7755

Human Service Center (Peoria)

[www.fayettecompanies.org](http://www.fayettecompanies.org)

(309) 589-7980

(309) 671-8000

Tazewood Mental Health Center (Pekin/East Peoria/Lincoln)

[www.tazewoodmentalhealth.org/subabuse.html](http://www.tazewoodmentalhealth.org/subabuse.html)

(309) 694-6462

(309) 347-5522

Get more information at:

<http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/>

### School Policies

Eureka College Alcohol & Other Drugs Policy can be found at <http://www.eureka.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Final-Handbook-2013-2014.pdf> (Pages 88-97)

### References

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