



# Co-Occurring Disorders: Depression and Alcohol Use

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) and depression often occur in tandem. Learn how to recognize these two conditions using the information below.

## DEFINITIONS

**Depression:** Depression is one of the most common mental health disorders in the U.S. It can happen at any age. Depression is diagnosed when a depressed mood or a loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities occurs for more than two weeks. The mood represents a change from the person's baseline.

**Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD):** Problem drinking that becomes severe is diagnosed as an AUD. Depression and anxiety are two of the most common mental health conditions associated with AUD.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

### DEPRESSION\*

- Depressed mood or irritability most of the day nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g., feels sad or empty) or observation made by others (e.g., appears tearful).
- Decreased interest or pleasure in most activities, most of the day.
- Significant weight change or change in appetite.
- Change in sleep (insomnia or hypersomnia).
- Fatigue or loss of energy.
- Suicidality to include thoughts of death or making a suicide plan.

\* Not everyone who is depressed experiences every symptom.

### AUD

- Drinking more or longer than you intended.
- A desire to cut down or stop drinking but cannot.
- Spending a lot of time drinking.
- Drinking often interferes with taking care of your home or family or causes problems with your job.

**Risky alcohol use** is drinking more than the single day or weekly amounts identified as low-risk drinking.

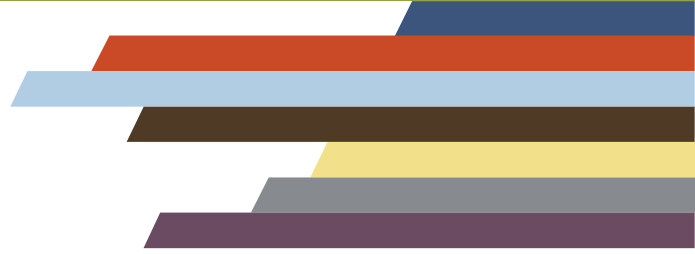
**Harmful alcohol use** is drinking more than the single-day or weekly amounts identified and having negative effects from drinking such as accidents, not being able to stop drinking, or not doing what you normally do (work, family, school) because of drinking.

		MEN	WOMEN
<b>Low-Risk Drinking Limits</b>  To stay low risk, keep within <b>BOTH</b> the single-day <b>AND</b> weekly limits.	On any single DAY	<b>4</b>  No more than 4 drinks on any day	<b>3</b>  No more than 3 drinks on any day
	Per WEEK	<b>14</b>  No more than 14 drinks on any Week	<b>7</b>  No more than 7 drinks on any week

## RESOURCES

- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
  - Call 1-800-950-6264 or email [info@nami.org](mailto:info@nami.org)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
  - Call 1-800-273-8255
- Rural Prevention and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders Toolkit
  - [ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/substance-abuse](http://ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/substance-abuse)
- SAMHSA National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- Alcohol Addiction Hotline (American Addiction Centers) at 1-855-831-2384
- Alcohol Patient Education available at [sbirt.care/education.aspx](http://sbirt.care/education.aspx)

## LOCAL RESOURCES OR CONTACT INFORMATION



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