



JUST THE FACTS: Traumatic Brain Injury

Avoiding Alcohol and Drug Misuse



- **Analyze the situation.** Take stock of how much you're drinking or using drugs. If your patterns have changed since the concussion, your alcohol or drug use may be an attempt to deal with your injury. Keep a two-week record of how much you're using. While recovering from your injury, it's best to abstain from drugs and alcohol.

- **Recognize alcohol or drug-use triggers.** Jot down daily events that occur before you start to drink or use. Can you identify triggers that consistently occur when you're drinking or using drugs, such as specific thoughts, behaviors, people, emotions, or places? Do you feel like drinking or using at a certain time of day? Monitoring your patterns will help you change your behavior.
- **Get help.** To quit or moderate your alcohol or drug use, a health care provider can direct you to useful resources, such as twelve-step meetings, rehab programs, and individual and group counseling sessions.
- **Replace the habit with healthier alternatives.** You'll be less likely to slip if you're feeling healthier and happier. Exercise, add fun sober activities to your day, and hang out with friends who do not use.
- **Talk to your support system.** Tell friends, family, and others with whom you're close that you're trying to quit using. When those close to you know, they can offer support.
- **Work on related issues.** If your drug or alcohol abuse is related to stress, physical pain, or depression, make sure you're addressing those problems.



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