



## Tips for Drinking Moderately



**What is Moderate Drinking?** To drink safely, you've got to know "when to say when." For most adults, a moderate amount of alcohol is not harmful and will not lead to alcohol-related problems. But what is a moderate amount?

Moderate alcohol use means:

- Up to two drinks per day for men.
- Up to one drink per day for women.
- Up to one drink per day for older adults.

One drink means:

- A 12-ounce bottle of beer.
- A 5-ounce glass of wine.
- 1.5 ounces of 80 proof distilled liquor.

Moderate alcohol use is **not** safe for everyone. The following groups should **not** drink alcohol:

- Pregnant women.
- Anyone planning to drive (*including a boat or ATV*) or operate machinery (*including power tools, lawn mowers, etc.*).
- People who take aspirin, Tylenol, or Percocet on a regular basis.
- People who take certain other medications (*please ask your health care professional about this*).
- People with medical conditions that can be made worse by drinking.
- Recovering alcoholics and substance addicts.

**Drinking Moderately:** Here are some things you can try that can help keep your drinking to a moderate level:

- **Before you go out think of three reasons you want to drink moderately.** For example:
  - I want to wake up early.
  - I want to exercise in the morning.
  - My girlfriend/boyfriend doesn't like it when I drink.
- **Only bring enough money for a couple drinks and leave your credit cards at home.**
- **Make a plan.** This could mean:
  - Deciding ahead of time how many drinks you will have and sticking to your decision.
  - Making a commitment to have a glass of water or a soda between each drink.
  - Making a plan to get home safely.
  - Committing to going home at a certain time before things get out of control.
  - Picturing yourself refusing a drink.
- **Call someone who cares about you.** While you're out, call someone who cares about you (*spouse, girlfriend/boyfriend, friend, sibling, parent*) and ask them to remind you why you decided to drink moderately. This works best if you tell them your reasons before you go out and you tell them that you are going to call. Keep a picture of them with you so you can look at it when you're thinking about ordering another drink.
- **Drink non-alcoholic drinks, or alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.**
- **Drink a lot of water, no matter what!**
- **Order some food instead.**



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### Putting Moderate Drinking into Action

Now, imagine that you are willing to cut down on your drinking, but you still want to go out and have a good time with your friends. Here are some ways to **refuse drinks when you have reached a moderate amount** (*one drink for women, two drinks for men*) or when you don't want to drink at all.

Which statements are you willing to try?

- "I'm driving."
- "No thanks." (*short and sweet, no explanation necessary*)
- "I have something to do in the morning." (for example, drive a friend to an appointment)
- "I'm training for..." (*a marathon/triathlon/other sporting event*)
- "I drank too much last night so I'm taking it easy tonight."
- "I'm taking a break from drinking for a couple weeks."
- "I have too much work to do in the morning."
- "I'm allergic to alcohol." (*"I'm allergic to alcohol—it makes me break out in handcuffs!"*)
- "If I have another one, I'll fall asleep. I'll get a coffee or a soda instead."
- "I have an important meeting tomorrow."
- "I'm OK for now." (*Keep a half-filled cup with you, whether or not you are drinking*)
- "I'm taking medication that I can't mix with alcohol."
- "I'm trying to lose some weight."
- "I had a migraine headache earlier."
- "I'm pregnant."
- "Maybe another time."
- "Thanks but I've already had enough to drink tonight."
- "Sorry, I never drink on Mondays." (*Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and so forth*)
- "No thanks. My liver is tired."
- "I'm under the weather today."
- "I don't feel like praying to the porcelain god tonight."
- "I have a bet with someone to see how long I can go without drinking."
- "I'm trying to prevent a beer belly."
- "I already have a six-pack!"

