

# ALCOHOL

*Alcohol is a potentially addictive substance. It is the most widely used substance in the world and is one of the oldest and most popular psychotropic substance/drugs known to mankind.*



## TYPES OF ALCOHOLS IN INDIA:

- *Indian Made Foreign Liquors[IMFL] – which are drinks made in India according to specifications of International brands. Eg. Whisky, Brandy, Rum, Vodka, Gin etc.*
- *Beers of different strengths and wine*
- *Indian made country liquor (IMCL), which are drinks made in India with government license;*
- *Home brewed country liquor (HBCL), which are illegally brewed but are consumed widely. Examples are toddy, mahua and chang*
- *Methanol is the most dangerous adulterant in illicit alcohol and is often the cause of life threatening –hooch tragedies*

## AVAILABLE FORMS:

*Stronger liquors, however, have become available in modern times through distillation.*

***Alcoholic drinks are available in the various forms.***

- *‘Distilled spirits’ or IMFL(Indian Made Foreign Liquor) such as whisky, brandy, rum and gin contains 35% to 50% alcohol whereas*
- *beers ordinarily contain 4 to 5%.*
- *Wines contain approximately 12% alcohol.*
- *However, fortified wines (prepared by adding brandy to wine) may contain about 20% of alcohol.*

*Due to these variations, alcoholic drinks measured in “Standard units”, one standard*

*unit of alcohol is 10ml of absolute alcohol.*

*The standard drink or a unit of alcohol corresponds to 10 ml of absolute alcohol.*

*One Standard Drink = ½ bottle of Standard Beer = ¼ bottle of Strong Beer = 1 peg (30 ml.) Spirits = ½ packet of Arrack = 1 glass (125 ml.) of table wine = 1 glass (60 ml.) fortified wine*

### **HOW DOES ALCOHOL CAUSE ADDICTION?**

*Alcohol like other addictive substances, activates and affects the brain's pleasure circuit. Over time, the brain actually changes in certain ways so that a powerful urge to use alcohol controls the persons' behaviour.*

### **TYPES OF PROBLEM DRINKING:**

*Depending on the severity, there are atleast three different types of drinking:*

*a) **Hazardous drinking:** When a person drinks in a way which increases their risk of developing some physical, mental or social harm in the future.*

*b) **Harmful drinking:** When a person drinks in a way which has already started causing some physical (eg. liver damage), mental (eg. depression) or social harm (eg. arguments with family or friends)*

*c) **Dependent drinking:** The most severe drinking problem and usually involves daily drinking. It includes a combination of harmful use of alcohol, craving and presence of withdrawal symptoms if they do not drink.*

### **WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS:**

- *Coarse tremors of hands, tongue or eyelids later*
- *Nausea/ vomiting*
- *Malaise/ weakness*
- *Increased pulse*
- *Sweating*
- *Elevated blood pressure*
- *Anxiety*
- *Depressed/ irritable mood*

- *Headache and sleeplessness*

*Sometime one could have severe withdrawal and may have*

- *Fits*
- *Disorientation*
- *Hallucinations,*
- *Illusions and delusions*

### **ADVERSE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL:**

*Alcohol consumption has:*

- *numerous health and social consequences*
- *is an important contributor to death and disability*
- *affects most of the organs of the body*
- *Worldwide, alcohol causes 1.8 million deaths each year*

<i>Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) mg/dl</i>	<i>Effects</i>
<i>&lt; 80</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Euphoria, feeling of relaxation and talking freely, clumsy movements of hands and legs, reduced alertness but believes himself to be alert.</i></li> </ul>
<i>&gt;80</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Noisy, moody, impaired judgement, impaired driving ability</i></li> </ul>
<i>100-200</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Electroencephalographic changes beg into appear, Blurred vision, unsteady gait, gross motor in-coordination, slurred speech, aggressive, quarrelsome, talking loudly</i></li> </ul>
<i>200-300</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Amnesia for the experience – blackout.</i></li> </ul>
<i>300-350</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Coma</i></li> </ul>
<i>355-600</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>May cause or contribute to death</i></li> </ul>

**1) PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL:** *Alcohol can negatively affect almost every part of the body.*

**Liver:** Conditions such as fatty liver, alcoholic hepatitis, fibrosis, cirrhosis and liver cancer may develop.

**Digestive system:** ulcers, nutrient deficiencies, intestinal problems, oesophageal cancer, gastric cancer etc

**Pancreas:** pancreatitis.

**Central nervous system (CNS):** Effects may include confusion, impaired coordination, stroke, brain damage, learning problems, and memory difficulties.

**Cardiovascular (CV) health:** Consuming too much alcohol is linked to high blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, trouble pumping blood through the body, blood clots, stroke, cardiomyopathy or heart attack.

**Reproductive health:** Both men and women may have reduced fertility with long-term, heavy drinking. Women who are pregnant are at increased risk for miscarriage, stillbirth, or having a child with abnormalities.

**2) PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS:** Harmful or dependent drinking can cause depression (persistent sadness and loss of interest with reduced sleep/appetite, guilt feelings, feelings of hopelessness etc.), anxiety (fear or worry without any apparent reason), suicidality, loss of memory and hallucinations.

**Other effects:**

- sleep changes,
- alterations in mood,
- personality changes,
- impaired concentration.

### **3) OCCUPATIONAL PROBLEMS**

- Poor work performance
- Absenteeism
- Poor relationship with colleague
- Discipline problems
- Loss of job
- Frequent job changes
- Lack of efficiency

### **4) FINANCIAL:**

- *Over expenditure on alcohol*
- *Debts*

#### 5) SOCIAL:

- *Stigma*
- *Isolation*
- *Loss of respect in society*

#### 6) FAMILY:

- *marital disharmony*
- *domestic violence*
- *neglect of parental responsibilities*

#### 7) LEGAL:

- *Fights*
- *Accidents*
- *Crime*
- *Other illegal activities like stealing, robbing*

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