

# what is...

...An Alcohol Problem?

Most experts agree a drinking problem is not only measured by how much a person drinks but by how alcohol affects the person's life, and the lives of those around them.

Knowing if someone has a problem with alcohol can be quite difficult.

If drinking is causing one or more problems in any of the following areas then you may consider seeking professional help for both you and your partner or friend.

- Family and Relationships
- Work
- Law
- Finances
- Sexual Relations
- Health
- Personal Safety
- Emotional Well-being

Call the Alcohol and Drug Information Service  
on **(07) 3236 2414**  
or **FREECALL 1800 177 833** (24hrs)  
for details on help available to you.

## Getting Help

The Alcohol and Drug Information Service is a free telephone counselling service which operates 24 hours a day. It provides anonymous and confidential information, advice and counselling to people concerned about their own drug use or a relative or friend's drug use. Brochures and other resources on alcohol and drug issues are also available.

Your local Community Health Centre may also have further information.

## Contact:

**Alcohol and Drug Information Service**  
**(07) 3236 2414** (all hours)

OR

Areas outside Brisbane:  
**FREECALL 1800 177 833**

## Helpful Websites:

- [www.health.qld.gov.au/atods](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/atods)
- [www.adin.com.au](http://www.adin.com.au)
- [www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au](http://www.nationalalcoholcampaign.health.gov.au)
- [www.drinkingchoices.com](http://www.drinkingchoices.com)
- [www.ceida.net.au](http://www.ceida.net.au)
- [www.adf.org.au](http://www.adf.org.au)



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This pamphlet is free of charge and is available from  
Alcohol and Drug Information Service  
Phone (07) 3236 2414 FREECALL 1800 177 833

# worried about someone's drinking

## Alcohol

### Facts for Family and Friends



**Queensland  
Government**  
Queensland Health

## Does my partner or friend have an Alcohol Problem?

### Ask yourself these questions

- Does the person get aggressive or even violent when they drink?
- Is money becoming a problem because too much is spent on drinking?
- Am I embarrassed by my partner's or friend's behaviour after they drink?
- Do I make excuses for this behaviour to friends, employers or others?
- Do I have to cope with my partner's or friend's hangovers?
- Do I drive home because my partner or friend is 'over the limit'?
- Are arguments about drinking starting to happen?
- Does my partner or friend get angry or upset if I suggest that they are drinking too much?
- Does 'having a drink' seem to be getting more important than other things?
- Has my partner or friend been in trouble with the police because of their behaviour when they were drunk?
- Has the personal safety of myself, partner or friend been threatened when they drink?

*If you answered YES to any of these questions, or any one happens on a regular basis, phone the Alcohol and Drug Information Service.*

## It is time to take ACTION for yourself

Phone the Alcohol and Drug Information Service **ANYTIME**

## Warning Signs for you.

Being a friend or partner of a person with an alcohol problem can be a problem for you. If you sometimes feel:

- Like you are to blame for your partner's or friend's drinking problems
- Tired or too tired to do the things you normally do, or even think clearly
- Sick or often have headaches
- Cut off from other people
- Bad about yourself, embarrassed or ashamed
- As if you can't talk to anyone about what's going on
- Numb, as if you cannot cry, or express other feelings like anger
- As if you cannot trust anyone
- Fear for your personal safety

## What can you do?

When people do not realise the effect of their drinking there is little reason for them to stop. If their drinking is affecting you and your ability to cope, it is time for you to do something. Here are some ways to deal with their drinking behaviour.

### Try to

- Talk to the drinker when they are sober and explain how their drinking is affecting you. Remain calm and logical, refuse to be drawn into an argument. Give concrete reasons. For example: You cannot rely on them to do things they've agreed to do.
- Point out you still care about them but that you won't support their drinking or make excuses for them any longer.
- Encourage them to seek help from their doctor, professional counsellors and/or support groups.

### Try not to or don't

- Make threats or say things you are not prepared to do.
- Discuss their 'drinking problem' when they are drinking.

- Get angry and tell them everything you've always hated about them.
- Get rid of their alcohol unless your or somebody else's immediate safety is threatened. It is important for them to make the first step.
- Buy them drinks or lend them money.
- Drink with them.

## Here are some ways to help yourself?

### Look after yourself

Make sure you are getting enough food, rest and exercise. Do things you enjoy. Have some time alone, just for you.

### Try to accept that people are responsible for their own actions

You can do some things that will help encourage someone to change, but you can't make others do things they don't want to do.

### Talk to an understanding friend

It may help to talk about the problem with a friend for support. This can help you to see things more clearly.

### Talk to a counsellor or doctor

Talking to someone outside your daily life like a professional counsellor or doctor can also be a great help. They have talked to many people in similar situations, and can suggest ways to deal with your problem.

### Attend a self help group

This is a chance to meet and share experiences with other people who face similar problems. There are several self-help groups for the family and friends of someone with a drinking problem. To find out about self help groups and other help that is available contact the Alcohol and Drug Information Service.