

**April is Alcohol Awareness Month**  
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When many people think of alcohol abusers, they picture teenagers drinking at unsupervised parties or old scruffy men on the street with their paper bag covered bottles of alcohol. However, over half of all Maine residents struggle with problems caused by alcohol and other substance use. People who abuse alcohol can be men, women, and children from every part of the state, from every type of demographic background. They could be college students who binge at the local bar. They could be professionals who drink after a long day at work. They could be senior citizens who drink out of loneliness.

To help people recognize the serious problem of alcohol abuse, April is designated as “Alcohol Awareness Month.” The following is a simple quiz highlighting some warning signs of alcohol abuse:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry or scare your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself that you won’t?
- Do you ever forget what you did or said while drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hangover after drinking?
- Do you drink often (more than several times a week)?
- When you drink, do you consume more than one or two drinks?
- Do all of your leisure activities revolve around drinking?
- Do you find excuses to drink (using good times, bad times, and social occasions as an excuse - for example: our sports team won, let’s celebrate!; we’re going to a BBQ, gotta bring some beer!; it’s the holiday season, must stock the bar!; had a stressful day, need a drink to unwind!)?

If you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, you may have a problem with alcohol.

If so, you are not alone. Alcohol dependence is a medical condition that can be effectively treated. Millions of Americans and their families are in healthy recovery from this disease. The first step to recovery is to be honest about the problem and to seek professional help. An assessment from a licensed alcohol and drug counselors (“LADC”) or other qualified alcohol and substance abuse providers can help identify the seriousness of your alcohol problem. If the assessment indicates that there is a problem, your alcohol and drug counselor can recommend the best course of treatment.

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