Let’s put an end to equality

Over the past several decades, women have struggled for equality. The movement has made many positive changes in the lives of women. There is one area, however, that we should take special care to avoid equality: Alcohol use and abuse. It is known that the bodies of men and women differ considerably. Women metabolize alcohol differently and, therefore, experience more detrimental health effects from its use. Consider the following facts about women and alcohol…

- Gender gap between women and men and their alcohol usage has narrowed to only a couple of percentage points
- 1996 study showed that 80% of Greek women were binge drinkers, compared with 35% of non-Greek women
- Females are 4 times more likely than their mothers to begin drinking by age 16
- Girls who begin drinking in their early teens have a greater chance than boys of becoming alcoholics
- Many studies support the notion that women feel less inhibited about sex while drinking
- Females abusing alcohol are at an increased risk for contracting sexually transmitted diseases
- 150% increase in “unplanned” sexual activities, date rape, and sexual assault when alcohol is involved
- Because of body chemistry, women develop higher blood alcohol levels when drinking an equivalent amount compared to men
- Women are affected by alcohol much more readily than men
- It takes one-third longer for a woman’s body to eliminate alcohol from the blood.
- Women develop physical complications, such as liver damage, hypertension, and hormonal imbalances much more rapidly than men
- There appears to be a link between breast cancer rates and alcohol consumption, even with light to moderate drinking.
- Heavier drinkers may be putting themselves at greater risk for osteoporosis

- Female alcoholics have death rates 50-100% higher than those of male alcoholics.

- A greater percentage of female alcoholics die from suicides, alcohol related accidents, circulatory disorders, and cirrhosis of the liver.

- Women who abuse alcohol experience significant impairments in learning/memory, perceptual-motor skills, and abstraction/problem solving abilities.

- The interval between onset of drinking-related problems and entry into treatment appears to be shorter for women than for men.

- Women tend to underestimate their drinking problems more than men.

- The American Medical Association describes chemical dependency this way: “If the continued use of alcohol or other drugs is causing any continued and significant disruption in an individual’s personal, social, spiritual, physical, or economic life, and the person does not stop using alcohol or other drugs, he or she is chemically dependent.”

- Did you know that binge drinking, for women, is defined as consuming four or more drinks in a row on a single occasion?

**Test Yourself**

1. Have you ever felt like you should cut down on your drinking or drug use?

2. Have you ever felt irritated by criticism of your drinking and drug use?

3. Have you ever felt guilty about your drinking, drug use, or your behavior during its use?

4. Do you ever take a drink or use drugs in the morning?

If you answered yes to one of these questions, the possibility that you are alcohol or drug dependent is significantly increased. This may also mean that, although you are not
dependent on alcohol or drugs at this time, you could become dependent if your pattern of abuse continues.

If you answered yes to two of these questions, it is very likely that you are dependent on drugs or alcohol.

If you answered yes to three or more of these questions, there is a greater than 95% chance that you are dependent on drugs or alcohol. Please seek assistance for your drug or alcohol problem immediately.

***Test Yourself: How is Alcohol Affecting You Academically?***

1. Have you ever missed a class because you had trouble getting up after using alcohol the night before?
2. Have you ever missed homework assignments because of your alcohol use?
3. Have you missed study sessions because of your alcohol use?
4. Have you ever been less prepared than usual because you were out drinking the night before a class/quiz/test?
5. Have you ever slept through an exam because of your alcohol use?
6. Have you taken time away from your studies to consume alcohol?

Use these questions as a guide to see how alcohol is affecting your schoolwork. If you find that it has affected you academically, it is time to make changes so that your studies do not suffer further.


If you feel you have difficulties with substance abuse, please visit CAPS, call us at 321 674-8050, or visit our website at www.fit.edu/caps.