

**INTRODUCTION - Alcohol Use & Misuse Among Seniors**

Among some retirees, the use of alcohol is commonplace.

Retirement is intended to be a time for enjoyment – to engage in social and recreational activities that provide fulfillment, joy, freedom, and countless friendships. Retirement is an earned reward for many years of working hard in one’s career. So, for some retirees the use of alcohol is merely an occasional ‘treat’ that helps them to relax and enjoy time with their friends, loved ones, and acquaintances.

However, for some seniors alcohol is becoming - or has already become - a problem in their life. Alcohol is considered *problematic* when negative health and/or life consequences result from excessive drinking patterns. Some retirees may be wondering if they need to ‘cut back’ or moderate their alcohol intake in the interests of their overall health and wellness. However, some seniors may be struggling with a more serious and/or long-term alcohol problem that requires more active attention – perhaps even warranting formal treatment intervention.

If you have a concern about your alcohol intake, please discuss the issue with your primary care provider. He or she can refer you to a behavioral health professional who can evaluate your alcohol situation, provide you with recommendations and feedback, as well as refer you to formal treatment programs and/or sober support services, if warranted.

An excellent resource to learn more about alcohol use / misuse is the **FREE** booklet jointly published by the Dept. of Health & Human Services *and* National Institute of Health, titled “Rethinking Drinking” -

*Rethinking Drinking is designed for U.S. adults who drink alcohol. It provides evidence-based information about alcohol and health along with tips, tools, and resources for those who want to cut down on or quit drinking.*

Simply click the link to access -

[https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/NIAAA\\_RethinkingDrinking.pdf](https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/NIAAA_RethinkingDrinking.pdf)

***Below are Questions & Answers about Alcohol Use / Misuse among seniors:***