

6 Sneaky Signs You Drink Too Much



1. You become a daredevil: Getting drunk can come with repercussions far worse than feeling embarrassed—it can lead to risky decisions. Alcohol is also a factor in approximately 60% of fatal burn injuries and drowning's, 40% of fatal falls and car accidents, and half of all sexual assaults, according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

2. You're a weekend warrior: If you don't drink daily but are drinking regularly, such as every Friday night, that's a red flag. While research shows that having about seven alcoholic beverages per week lowers your risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease, abstaining all week only to guzzle five or six glasses in a single sitting negates any of alcohol's potential health benefits. Moreover, binge drinking can raise blood pressure and interfere with certain medications.

3. Drinking just "creeps up on you": Have you ever told yourself you were going to have only a drink or two at happy hour, and before you knew it you'd downed four? One of the clues that you may be a binge drinker is not knowing your limits—or feeling surprised when you've "suddenly" passed them.

4. Your memory has temporarily gone missing: Researchers speculate that heavy drinking interferes with how you remember by disrupting a key brain messenger called glutamate, which is linked to memory. That means if you have ever "forgotten" parts of the night until your drinking buddies reminded you, or have woken up foggy as to how you got home and into bed, you've definitely had one (or three) too many.

5. You let some responsibilities slide: Drinking is a problem when you notice that you've started to neglect things that are important to you for the sake of alcohol. Maybe you skip your Monday morning spin class because you feel hung-over from the weekend. When drinking is prioritized over your normal day-to-day life, you're probably in the danger zone.

6. People close to you seem concerned: If your family, friends, or co-workers have hinted (or flat-out vocalized) that they're worried about you, it's time to cut back. The first step is to recognize that you're drinking more than you should, followed by setting some goals to change your behavior.

