



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## Health Department: Get Screened for Alcohol Consumption

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BURLINGTON – Young adults in Vermont have a perception problem when it comes to how much alcohol is safe to drink. Half (51%) of Vermonters, ages 18 to 25, are binge drinkers. One-quarter (24%) of those young adults – far lower than the national average of 34 percent – think there is any health risk involved with drinking five or more drinks at a sitting twice a week.

The Vermont Department of Health encourages everyone who drinks alcohol, young adults and older, to assess how much they drink as a preventative health measure, similar to having your blood pressure or cholesterol level checked.

On Vermont Prevention Day, Thursday, April 25, and throughout Alcohol Awareness Month in April, the Health Department and partners are working to prompt people to learn about safe drinking guidelines and access alcohol screening resources online or by phone.

"Many people, not just young adults, do not know what low-risk drinking is," said Barbara Cimaglio, deputy health commissioner. "One solution is to encourage everyone to get screened for drinking patterns that are unsafe, risky or harmful. Knowing there is a problem is often the first step to finding a solution."

Unsafe drinking can lead to cancer, liver disease and higher risk for heart attack and stroke. Serious injuries from motor vehicle crashes, intimate partner violence, and child mistreatment and neglect can also result from alcohol abuse.

Up to one drink per day for women, and up to two drinks per day for men is considered moderate, or safe drinking.

Screening and intervention by a health care provider can significantly decrease the number of drinks consumed and the number of binge drinking episodes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Most adults who drink consume safe and healthy amounts," Cimaglio said, "but there are many people who don't realize they have a drinking problem because no one asks them about their drinking patterns. Take a moment to assess your drinking and learn if you need to make a change."

The Health Department is promoting a toll free number (1-800-639-6095) for confidential screening, or visit [www.alcoholscreening.org](http://www.alcoholscreening.org) for anonymous online screening.

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