



Aetna Resources For LivingSM

Choosing to have a drink? Or drinking because you have no choice?



Alcoholism is a serious illness. Many people think it's defined by how often, how much or what you drink. But it's actually about the fact that drinking is no longer a choice.

A need you can't control

Drinking can become an addiction when your need for alcohol is so intense that you can't stop. At that point, alcohol can have the power to ruin your career, relationships, finances and emotional and physical health. That's a heavy toll.

Problem drinking: a common problem

You probably know someone who has a drinking problem. In fact, statistics show that over half of all adults have a family history of alcohol issues.¹ And over seven million children live in homes where one or more parent suffers from problem drinking.¹

What recovery experts want you to know

There are treatments for alcoholism. Statistics show there are about 20 million people living in recovery.¹

Some people may be able to beat their alcohol issue on their own. But outside support is often key. There are different ways to get that assistance²:

- **Medical help** — Special clinics, doctors and other health providers can help. They can offer medical treatment including drugs. Such drugs may work to control cravings and anxiety and assist with detox.
- **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)** — AA is a support system and program that has helped millions of people.³ You can find AA groups almost everywhere. Just go to www.aa.org to learn more.
- **Counseling** — Therapists can help you tackle issues that may have led to addiction. And family therapy can help loved ones support each other.

No shame, no blame, all gain

Stigma and blame can still get in the way of people getting help. Do you or someone you know have an alcohol problem? Realize that those who love you want you to recover and regain your quality of life.

¹<https://www.ncadd.org/about-addiction/support/medication-assisted-recovery>

²<http://www.webmd.com/mental-health/addiction/understanding-alcohol-abuse-treatment>

³<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/alcoholics-anonymous-founded>

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