

Feeling the Holiday 'Spirit'

The holiday season is fast approaching and people want to Eat, Drink and Be Merry. It can be a joyful time of year but can also be a time of stress. Christmas can sometimes mean overindulgence – people spend more money, eat more food and drink more alcohol. We think of good times with family and friends, singing carols, decking the halls and crowded malls. It's the time of year when we visit our neighbours, get together with others and enjoy the true spirit of the holidays.

It is also the time of year when many people will party or go to social gatherings and will choose to drink alcohol. If you choose to serve alcohol, be the perfect host – help arrange rides, don't over serve, provide non-alcoholic options (mocktails) and coffee, tea or water and give time for guests to sober up.

Earlier this year, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse released low-risk alcohol guidelines. These guidelines are intended to provide consistent information across the country to help Canadians moderate their alcohol consumption and reduce their alcohol-related harm. During the holidays, and throughout the year, take note of these guidelines and practice them, if you choose to drink.

Safer Drinking Tips:

- Set limits for yourself and stick to them. Stay within the weekly limits to reduce your long-term health risks by drinking no more than:
 - 10 drinks a week for women, with no more than 2 drinks a day most days.
 - 15 drinks a week for men, with no more than 3 drinks a day most days.
 - Plan non-drinking days every week to avoid developing a habit.
- Drink slowly. Have no more than 2 drinks in any 3 hours.
- Eat before and while you are drinking.
- For every drink of alcohol, have one non-alcoholic drink.
- Always consider your age, body weight and health problems that might suggest lower limits.
- While drinking may provide health benefits for certain groups of people, do not start to drink or increase your drinking for health benefits.

On Special Occasions:

- Plan to drink in a safe environment.
- Reduce your risk of injury and harm by drinking no more than 3 drinks (for women) or 4 drinks (for men) on any single occasion.

It is important to remember that all drinks are not equal. Count one drink at the proper amounts for each type. A drink is one 341 ml (12 oz.) of 5% alcohol, for example beer, cider or cooler; one 142 ml (5 oz.) glass of wine with 12% alcohol content; or one 43 ml (1.5 oz.) serving of 40% distilled alcohol content like rye, gin, or rum, etc.

When Zero's The Limit

There are times when the alcohol limit is zero. Do not drink when you are: driving a vehicle or using machinery and tools, taking medicine or other drugs that interact with alcohol, doing any kind of dangerous physical activity, living with mental or physical health problems, living with alcohol

dependence, pregnant or planning to be pregnant, responsible for the safety of others or making important decisions.

For more information about low risk drinking guidelines, visit www.ccsa.ca. If you have any questions or are experiencing a difficult time and you need support, contact your local Mental Health & Addiction Services office, visit www.westernhealth.nl.ca or contact:

Mental Health Addictions		
Corner Brook	634-4506/4171	634-4506/4171
Stephenville	643-8740	643-8720
Port aux Basques	695-4629	695-4650
Burgeo	886-1550	886-2185
Deer Lake	635-7830	635-7830
Norris Point	458-2381	458-2381
Port Saunders	861-9125	861-9125

Mental Health Crisis Line 1-888-737-4668
NL Health Line 1-888-729-2929

Enjoy non-alcoholic drinks for any occasion.



Cardinal Punch

- 2 oz. Cranberry Juice
- 2 oz. Ginger ale
- ½ oz. Lemon Juice
- 1 oz. Orange Juice
- Lemon + Orange slices (garnish)

Pour juices into a tall glass half filled with ice cubes.
Top with ginger ale.

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