

Guidance on How to Help an Alcoholic Get Into Rehab

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If someone close to you is struggling with alcohol addiction, you may be worried about how to talk to him or her or you may feel like there's nothing you can do. But, there are ways to be effective helping an alcoholic. Here is some guidance on how to help an alcoholic stop drinking, with emphasis on ways to talk to someone with an alcohol-use disorder (AUD) about getting professional treatment for the addiction.

How Much Alcohol Use is a Problem?

The majority of people who use alcohol do not have a drinking problem. Many drink socially. Others drink only on infrequent occasions. Others “binge” frequently drink, which can lead to the development of alcohol use disorder. This is a hazardous level of alcohol use that can lead to severe impacts on the physical and mental health and safety, finances, and relationships of the user.

What are Binge Drinking and AUD?

The steps to helping an alcoholic necessarily begin with understanding the problem a little better. After all, before you can hope to help someone with an alcohol abuse problem, you need to know as much as possible about what to expect:

Binge Drinking

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse, binge drinking refers to a rate of alcohol consumption that raises the blood alcohol level to 0.08 or higher. That's about 5 or more standard drinks for men in 2 hours and about 4 for women. People who binge

drink at least 5 times per month are classed as heavy drinkers. 2019 data reveal that approximately 25% of US adults (18 or older) said they had engaged in binge drinking within the previous month, and about 6% said they had been drinking heavily within the last month.

Alcohol Use Disorder

AUD is a medical condition that can develop from habitual binge drinking. It is recognizable by signs and symptoms such as a person's seeming inability to quit drinking or to control the amount of alcohol used. The individual appears compelled to drink alcohol even when faced with extremely negative professional, social, financial, familial, or mental and physical health consequences.

Common Effects of AUD

AUD is a dangerous pattern of alcohol consumption that can lead to alcohol use disorder, which requires [alcohol addiction recovery](#) treatment to overcome it. It can also result in other serious effects, for example:

- Automobile accidents with injuries
- DUI charges
- Domestic violence
- Sexual assault
- STDs
- Risky sexual activity
- Diminished memory
- Diminished cognitive ability
- Increased rates of cancer of the:
 - Liver
 - Mouth
 - Breast
 - Stomach
 - Intestines
- Increased rates of:
 - Strokes
 - Heart attacks
 - Chronic diseases

Signs of Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)

The signs of alcoholism, per the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders, 5th Edition, known as the DSM-5, can include:

- Failed efforts to quit drinking
- Endangering others by driving while intoxicated
- Drinking, though it negatively impacts work performance

- Habitually drinking more than intended
- Craving alcohol
- Frequently sick (hung over) from drinking
- Tolerance requiring larger amounts of alcohol for the same effects
- Experiencing physical withdrawal symptoms when attempting to stop drinking

How to Talk and NOT to Talk to a Person with AUD

Often, the answer to how to help an alcoholic is about finding the most effective way to talk to him/her about the problem and getting professional help to overcome addiction. Here are some wrong ways and suggested better ways to approach someone with AUD about the problem.

Naturally, you'll want to avoid approaches that may seem confrontational and choose the most compassionate, tactful, and noncontroversial manner of talking to your loved one about AUD:

WRONG WAY: Approaching the individual while they are drinking or under the influence of alcohol. This is unlikely to lead to a desirable outcome.

BETTER WAY: Instead, approach your loved one while he or she is sober.

WRONG WAY: Opening the conversation by accusing the person of being an alcoholic who is ruining his/her life and yours.

BETTER WAY: Try starting the conversation with statements about how you feel. For example, you might say, "I feel worried when I see you missing work the day after you've been drinking."

WRONG WAY: Bringing up the individual's worsening financial, professional, and personal problems due to drinking.

BETTER WAY: Avoid pointing out these consequences to your loved one. Focus instead on the idea of improving his/her situation by getting effective help.

WRONG WAY: Comments that are likely to trigger a defensive attitude, like, "Your drinking is ruining our relationship."

BETTER WAY: Talk about your fears and sadness about how things are going and express your concern, desire to help, and hopes for a positive outcome of efforts to work together on the problem.

ADDITIONALLY: As you avoid blaming or comments to make your loved one feel guilty, also avoid taking on your loved one's responsibilities, thereby enabling him/her to persist in drinking and high-risk behaviors. Further, avoid drinking with your loved one.

For Inspiring AUD Rehab – Renaissance Recovery Center

We offer intensive outpatient treatment for recovery from alcohol use disorder. It's easier to help an alcoholic make the most of the rehab experience in the comfortable and supportive rehab environment at Renaissance. We're here to help you 24/7, so feel free to call us *anytime* for guidance.

Call Renaissance Recovery Center at (480) 526-7738, or contact us here online for help getting started on your new satisfying life free from alcohol addiction.
