

Teen Drinking & ADHD



1 in 3 adolescents with ADHD report past year alcohol use.¹

"If you have ADHD, having one drink is like the same as other people having two. It makes you much less inhibited and more impulsive. And so I feel like people with ADHD are more likely to get in trouble or have negative consequences."

- Male, age 16, with ADHD²

Is it safe for my teen with ADHD to drink?

The best health advice for teens with ADHD is not to drink at all because they are at an increased risk to develop a substance use disorder and experience more severe symptoms of ADHD.



Stimulant medications are the "first-line" medications recommended for teens with ADHD.

Several studies have shown that teens taking stimulants for ADHD are less likely to develop substance use disorders compared to teens with ADHD who are not on medication.

The recommended treatment for ADHD is medication and behavioral supports.

It is important to treat ADHD and any mental health disorders, like depression or anxiety, that commonly co-occur with ADHD. Treating ADHD with medication and behavioral supports can help your child do his or her best, and decrease the chance of developing substance use problems.



Alcohol and stimulants don't mix.

Drinking alcohol while on stimulant medication may increase heart rate and blood pressure, raise body temperature and cause an irregular heartbeat. Stimulants can also mask the effects of alcohol, leading to overconsumption.

For more information: <https://goo.gl/k9lyCW>

1. Weitzman et al. (2015). "Alcohol and Marijuana Use and Risks for Treatment Non-Adherence Among Medically Vulnerable Youth." Pediatrics.

2. Weitzman et al. (2015). "Shaped By My Disease: Perspectives on Substance Use by Youth with Chronic Medical Conditions." National Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting.

