

# Alcohol and the Immune System: Another COVID-19 Risk Factor



Studies show an increase in alcohol purchasing and consumption since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Isolation, state laws relaxing alcohol purchase, and inability to readily access support groups are all contributing factors.

## Remember:

- Alcohol increases inflammation in the body
- Alcohol interferes with the body's immune response
- Alcohol use can increase the risk of acute respiratory distress syndrome and pneumonia

## Excessive drinking levels are defined as:

### Women

8 or more drinks a week   
4 or more drinks within 2-3 hours 

### Men

15 or more drinks a week   
5 or more drinks within 2-3 hours 

### Pregnant Women



Any alcohol use

### Under 21



Any alcohol use

## Instead, try healthier strategies to cope:



Take breaks



Exercise



Stick to a sleep schedule



Eat a rainbow of fruits and vegetables



Seek help  
(FindTreatment.gov)



Reduce or avoid alcohol

## References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm>

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/directors-blog-alcohol-poses-different-challenges-during-covid-19-pandemic>

World Health Organization: [https://www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/437608/Alcohol-and-COVID-19-what-you-need-to-know.pdf](https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/437608/Alcohol-and-COVID-19-what-you-need-to-know.pdf)