

## News Release

For more information contact:

Dr. Gary L. Wood or Dr. Patricia N. Alexander

(813) 870-0392 (Hillsborough County, Florida)

(727) 576-5164 (Pinellas County, Florida)

(800) 870-0392 (Out-of-area)

### **But It's Only Beer! (Part II)**

**Tampa, Florida (May, 2011).** This article is Part II on the topic of understanding the impact of alcohol on one's personal and professional life. The following covers some basic information to consider if one chooses to drink:

- ◆ **What does it mean to drink moderately?**  
While there is no one definition of moderate drinking, the term is generally used to describe a lower-risk pattern of drinking. According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, drinking in moderation is defined as having no more than 1 drink per day for women and no more than 2 drinks per day for men. This definition is referring to the amount consumed on any single day and is not intended as an average over several days.
- ◆ **What is binge drinking?**  
According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, binge drinking is defined as a pattern of alcohol consumption that brings the blood alcohol concentration level to 0.08% or more. This pattern of drinking usually corresponds to 5 or more drinks on a single occasion for men or 4 or more drinks on a single occasion for women, generally within about 2 hours.
- ◆ **What does it mean to get drunk?**  
“Getting drunk” or intoxicated is the result of consuming excessive amounts of alcohol. Binge drinking typically results in acute intoxication. Alcohol intoxication can be harmful for a variety of reasons, including: Impaired brain function resulting in poor judgment, reduced reaction time, loss of balance and motor skills, or slurred speech. Dilation of blood vessels causes a feeling of warmth but

**results in rapid loss of body heat. There is an increased risk of certain cancers, stroke, and liver diseases (e.g., cirrhosis), particularly when excessive amounts of alcohol are consumed over extended periods of time. There is the possibility of damage to a developing fetus if consumed by pregnant women. And as we are all aware, there is an increased risk of motor-vehicle traffic crashes, violence, and other injuries. If alcohol is consumed rapidly and in large amounts coma and death may occur.**

**There are many strategies you can try to cut back or quit drinking. To get started:**

- ◆ Keep track of your drinking and set a drinking limit.**
- ◆ Be honest with yourself regarding the amount and patterns of your drinking.**
- ◆ Try to avoid places where heavy drinking occurs.**
- ◆ If you keep alcohol in your home, keep only a limited supply.**

**What can you do if you or someone I know has a drinking problem? What can you do if you aren't even certain that there is a problem? Just call your EAP and you will be directed to our experienced team of counselors. It is that simple. We will help you cope, find assistance, and guide you down the path to effectively dealing with whatever might be impacting your life. Help is available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.**