



Did You Know?

January 2021

Make Dry Fly: “New Year, new me!” **Dry January**, a growing global trend that involves abstaining from alcohol during the month of January, grants participants the opportunity to hit the reset button as they enter the New Year. Along with the monetary benefits of not purchasing alcohol throughout January, the month long challenge also presents wonderful benefits to a person’s health. Remember, alcohol doesn’t have to be the default beverage when celebrating.

What You Should Know:

- A poll conducted by YouGov found that 1 in 5 surveyed Americans participated in **Dry January** in 2019. Of those Americans not participating in the challenge, 21% agreed that Dry January was a good idea.
- A study from the University of Sussex followed 800 people who participated in **Dry January** during 2018. The study found
 - Many participants reported reduced drinking patterns even months after the initial challenge
 - On average drinking days decreased from 4.3 per week to 3.3.
 - Consumption dropped by 1.5 units per day.
 - The average of reported incidents of drunkenness dropped from 3.4 to 2.1 times a month.
 - Participants reported higher energy levels, a greater sense of achievement, better focus, weight loss, healthier skin, and improved sleep.
- Participating in **Dry January** can have positive impacts on your budget. A recent Harris Poll for TD Ameritrade provided exclusively to USA TODAY shared that:
 - Millennials spend about \$300 a month on alcohol.
 - Gen Xers spend around \$151 a month on alcohol
 - Boomers spend around \$97 on alcohol.
- Alcohol can be linked to many severe health conditions and illnesses including: liver disease, heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, mental illness and depression, use disorders, and ultimately death.
- Taking a break or limiting alcohol consumption can allow a user to gain control over their use. Eighty percent (80%) of surveyed **Dry January** participants claimed that after the month long challenge they had a greater sense of control and understanding regarding their drinking habits. Meanwhile, 71% of participants stated, after **Dry January** they realized that, “they don’t need a drink [alcohol] to enjoy themselves.”

What You Can Do:

- **Find Your Pace:** Maybe you missed the beginning of January, is it too late to participate? No, it’s never too late or too early to start making healthy choices. Take time to look over your own drinking habits and decide on what you realistically need to change in order to find a healthier balance in life. Maybe its full abstinence, or maybe it’s just making a conscious effort to cut back on consumption. Either way, find what works for you.
- **Fight the Stigma:** Coinciding with one of **Dry January’s** main goals, we must help change the conversation surrounding the false notion that alcohol is necessary in the pursuit of fun. By promoting such meaningful campaigns like **Dry January** or **#MakeDryFly**, we can raise awareness and support those in recovery, *and those with unhealthy habits or behaviors*. Remember, abstaining doesn’t mean you are missing out. More often than not, cutting back allows for greater opportunities to grow and gain a healthier lifestyle.

Information obtained from: alcoholchange.org.uk; niaaa.nih.gov; sussex.ac.uk; today.yougov.com; usatoday.com

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The Prevention Council of Erie County, publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs -- America’s #1 public health problem. The Prevention Council • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • www.thepreventioncouncil.org