



# Did You Know? January 2022

**You Don't Need Alcohol to Celebrate:** A new year typically involves new opportunities, new adventures, new goals, new gym memberships, and new chances! As we step into this New Year, The Prevention Council invites you to take on the new and growing challenge of **Dry January**. Originally started in 2012 by Alcohol Change UK, **Dry January** involves participants abstaining from alcohol during the month of January. We believe this is a wonderful way to change drinking habits as well as remind participants that they don't need any substance to have fun and enjoy the moment. Besides the health and monetary benefits of participating in Dry January, you aren't "you" when you are under the influence of alcohol and other drugs.

## What You Should Know:

- The Bureau of Labor concludes that the average American spends approximately one percent of their annual gross income on alcohol purchases (around \$565 on average per year.)
- The American Psychological Association recently shared that one in four adults reported drinking more in 2021 to manage their stress.
- The latest Harris Poll analytics shared that 17% of respondents reported "heavy drinking" between mid-August and mid-September. Heavy drinking is defined as four or more alcoholic beverages for women and five or more for men in one day.
- The most recent YouGov poll shared that around one in seven Americans participated in Dry January during 2021.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shares that long term effects of alcohol use include:
  - Mental health problems, including depression and anxiety.
  - Learning and memory problems, including dementia and poor school performance.
  - Social problems, including family problems, job-related problems, and unemployment.
- The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) states, "an estimated 95,000 people (approximately 68,000 men and 27,000 women) die from alcohol-related causes annually, making alcohol the third-leading preventable cause of death in the United States. The first is tobacco..."

## What You Can Do:

- **Share Your Start:** When starting any resolutions or goals, share that info with your friends and loved ones to create a great safety net of support. Having others cheer us on can keep us motivated and help us stay accountable. Try sharing your journey on social platforms like Instagram and Facebook, and invite others to join in the fun! Participating in meaningful campaigns like **Dry January** or **#MakeDryFly** raises awareness and shows support for those in recovery. 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.
- **Find Alternatives:** Try mock-tails and other nonalcoholic drinks when in a setting where alcoholic beverages would normally be available. There are many non-alcoholic options out there, so have fun and find something new to excite your taste buds!
- **Feel the Difference:** While you are actively abstaining from alcohol use, take note of how your body feels. Focus your mind and notice any mental and physical benefits you are experiencing.

Information obtained from: [businessinsider.com](https://www.businessinsider.com); [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov); [niaaa.nih.gov](https://www.niaaa.nih.gov)

USE for PRESS RELEASE More info: Joshua Vacanti 716-831-2298 [jvacanti@thepreventioncouncil.org](mailto:jvacanti@thepreventioncouncil.org)

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](http://www.thepreventioncouncil.org)