

Alcohol and COVID-19: what you need to know



Under no circumstances should you drink any type of alcoholic product as a means of preventing or treating COVID-19 infection.

Consumption of alcohol WILL NOT protect you from COVID-19.

Avoid alcohol altogether

so that you do not undermine your own immune system and health and do not **put at risk** the health of others.



Do not use alcohol as a way of dealing with your emotions and stress

as isolation and drinking may also increase the risk of suicide. Please call a health hotline if you have suicidal thoughts.



Reach out for help

if you think your drinking or the drinking of someone close to you is out of control.



Never mix alcohol with medications

even herbal or over-the-counter remedies, as this could make them less effective, or it might increase their potency to a level where they become toxic and dangerous.



Avoid alcohol as a social cue for smoking

and vice versa, as smoking is associated with more complicated and dangerous progression of COVID-19.



Discuss with children and young people the problems associated with drinking and COVID-19

such as violations of quarantine and physical distancing, which can make the pandemic worse.



Make sure that children and young people do not have access to alcohol

and **do not drink in their presence**— be a role model. Monitor the screen time of your children, as TV and other media are flooded with alcohol advertising and misinformation that may stimulate early initiation and increased consumption.



[Alcohol and COVID-19: what you need to know \(infographic\)](#)

Publication date: 2020

Under no circumstances should you drink any type of alcoholic product as a means of preventing or treating COVID-19 infection. Consumption of alcohol WILL NOT protect you from COVID-19. This infographic provides important information on what to do and what not to do in regard to alcohol during the COVID-19 pandemic, including: avoiding alcohol altogether, reaching out for help, avoiding alcohol as a social cue for smoking, discussing with children and young people the problems associated with drinking and COVID-19, not using alcohol as a way of dealing with your emotions and stress, never mixing alcohol with medications, and making sure that children and young people do not have access to alcohol.

[English](#)

[Arabic](#)

Alcohol and COVID-19: what you need to know



Facing the COVID-19 (new coronavirus disease) pandemic, the countries of the world must take decisive action to stop the spread of the virus. In these critical circumstances, it is essential that everyone is informed about other health risks and hazards so that they can stay safe and healthy.

The following factsheet provides important information that you should know about alcohol consumption and COVID-19. It addresses, among other things, the misinformation that is being spread through social media and other communication channels about alcohol and COVID-19.

The most important point to remember:

In no way will consumption of alcohol protect you from COVID-19 or prevent you from being infected by it

General facts about alcohol and your body



Ethyl alcohol (ethanol) is the substance in alcoholic beverages that is responsible for most of the harms that arise from their consumption, irrespective of whether it is consumed in the form of wine, beer, spirits or anything else.

Unfortunately, other toxic substances that may smell like ethanol can be added in adulterated beverages that are produced informally or illegally; or they may be present in alcoholic products that are not intended for human consumption, such as hand disinfectant. Added substances such as methanol can be fatal even in small amounts or may lead to blindness and kidney disease, among other problems. According to media reports and anecdotal sources, deaths related to the ingestion of such alcoholic products, based on the mistaken belief that they will somehow offer protection against the virus, have already occurred in some countries during the COVID-19 outbreak.

These are the general facts you should know about the consumption of alcohol and health:

- Alcohol has effects, both short-term and long-term, on **almost every single organ of your body**. Overall, the evidence suggests that there is **no "safe limit"** – in fact, the risk of damage to your health increases with each drink of alcohol consumed.
- Alcohol use, especially heavy use, **weakens the immune system** and thus reduces the ability to cope with infectious diseases.
- Alcohol, even in very small quantities, is known to **cause certain types of cancer**.

[Alcohol and COVID-19: what you need to know \(summary\)](#)

Publication date: 2020

Under no circumstances should you drink any type of alcoholic product as a means of preventing or treating COVID-19 infection. Consumption of alcohol will not protect you from COVID-19. Alcohol use, especially heavy use, weakens the immune system and reduces its ability to cope with infectious diseases, including COVID-19. This two-pager summarizes the content provided in the full (six-page) factsheet that follows. It addresses general myths about COVID-19 and provides important information on what to do and what not to do in regard to alcohol during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[English](#)

[Arabic](#)

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The following factsheet provides important information that you should know about alcohol consumption and COVID-19. It addresses, among other things, the misinformation that is being spread through social media and other communication channels about alcohol and COVID-19.

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[Alcohol and COVID-19: what you need to know \(full factsheet\)](#)

Publication date: 2020

Facing the COVID-19 pandemic, the countries of the world must take decisive action – ranging from testing, physical distancing, quarantining and strict community lockdowns – to slow down and stop the spread of the virus. In these critical circumstances, it is essential that everyone is informed about other health risks and hazards so that they can stay safe and healthy. This factsheet provides important information that you should know about alcohol consumption and COVID-19. It addresses, among other things, the misinformation that is being spread through social media and other communication channels about alcohol and COVID-19. A two-page summary of this factsheet can be found above.

[English](#)

[Arabic](#)

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