



ALCOHOL

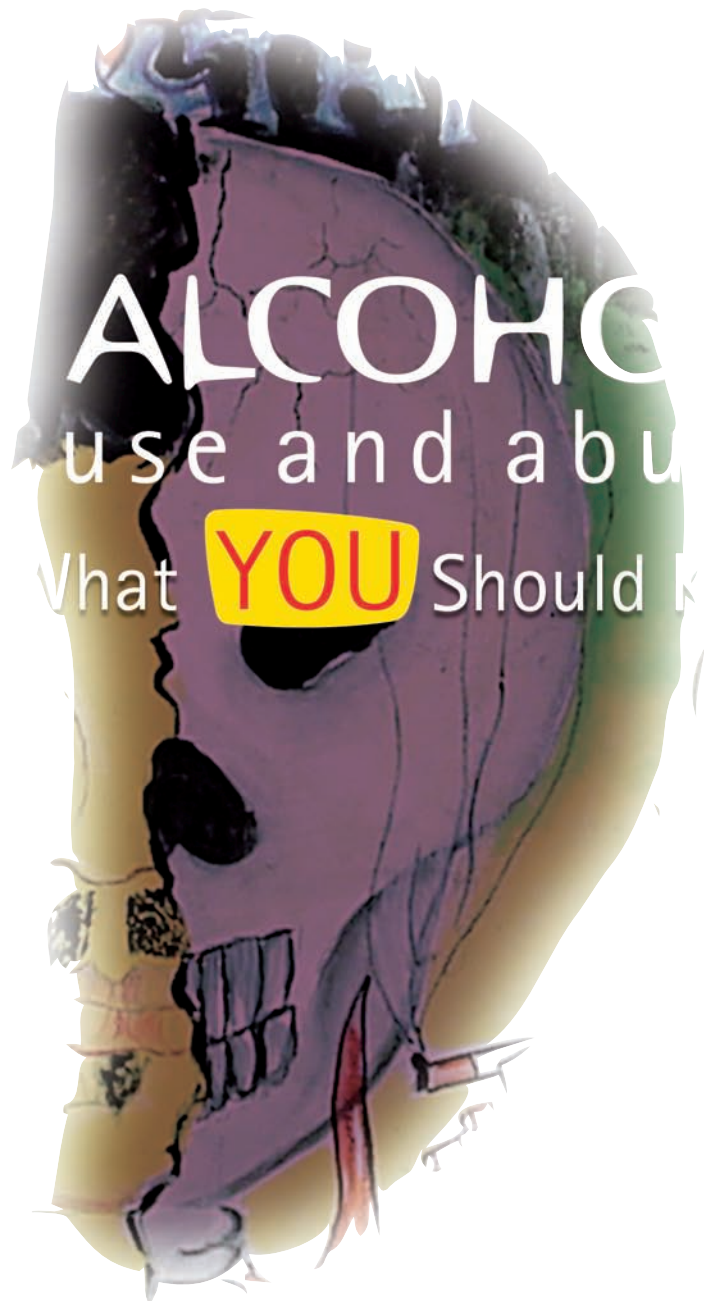
..use and abuse..

What **YOU** Should Know



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“ALCOHOL CONTROL” SERIES, No. 4

Other titles in the “Alcohol Control” Series are:

- No.1. Burden and Socio-Economic Impact of Alcohol —
The Bangalore Study
- No.2. Public Health Problems Caused by Harmful Use of Alcohol —
Gaining Less or Losing More?
- No.3. Alcohol Control Policies in the South-East Asia Region —
Selected Issues
- No.5. Reducing Harm from Use of Alcohol — Community Responses

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Frequently asked questions about alcohol use

Q 1. What is alcohol?

Alcohol is a generic term for many different chemical compounds; each with its own distinct properties. It is a clear, colourless liquid that comes from fermenting — or breaking down — natural substances such as fruit, corn, grain or sugarcane. The type of alcohol consumed by humans is ethyl alcohol or ethanol. Ethanol can have different colours, tastes, potency (strength) and flavours, depending on the fruits or vegetables used in its manufacture, the process of manufacture and the additives used. Beer, wine, liquor as well as medicines, colognes, cleaning solutions and even car fuel all contain ethanol.

Q 2. What are the different types of alcohol-containing beverages?

Name of Beverage	Alcohol content (%)
Brandy	40 - 55
Whisky (Scotch)	40 - 55
Rum	40 - 55
Wine (Port, Sherry, Champagne, etc.)	10 - 22
Beer	4 - 8
Arrack	50 - 60
Toddy	5 - 10
Vodka	35 - 60
Gin	40 - 50
Breezer	3 - 5



1 Standard drink equals



1 standard bottle of
regular beer (285ml)



1 single measure of
spirit (30ml)



1 glass of
wine (120ml)



1 measure of
aperitif (60ml)

Note: One unit of alcohol is equal to approximately 10 grams of absolute alcohol.

Q 3. I am confused about the various terms used when talking about alcohol. Please clarify what is alcohol use, harmful use of alcohol, alcohol abuse, and alcohol dependence?

Alcohol use, as the term implies, is the consumption of alcohol. It does not indicate the amount used or the extent of harm from use. Alcohol use usually starts as a social phenomenon. Many communities consider the occasional use of alcohol, for recreational purposes or on social occasions, as 'normal' and 'acceptable'. There is little awareness that even the occasional or social use of alcohol does carry a risk of road traffic injuries or industrial accidents. Intoxication from occasional use can lead to violence or socially inappropriate or embarrassing behaviour.

Harmful use of alcohol is when some people, usually after a period of prolonged use, develop a pattern of use which causes damage to an

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