

How to Stick to a Dry Month and Beyond

Completing a dry month from alcohol can be a challenging yet rewarding experience. Whether you are taking on this challenge for personal health reasons or as a way to support a charitable cause, the benefits of abstaining from alcohol for a month can be significant. Here are some tips to help you successfully complete a dry month:

>SET A GOAL.

It's important to have a clear goal in mind for why you're doing a dry month. Write down your reasons for taking on this challenge and keep them in a visible place to remind yourself

of your motivation when you're feeling tempted to drink.

>PLAN AHEAD.

Avoid situations where alcohol is readily available. Instead, plan activities that don't involve alcohol, such as going to the movies, taking a yoga class, or going for a hike.

>FIND SUPPORT.

Enlist the support of family and friends who can help keep you accountable and offer encouragement when you need it. In addition, you can also join a support group or online community of people completing a dry month.

>STAY HYDRATED.

Drinking plenty of water can help curb cravings for alcohol and keep you feeling refreshed and energized.

>TRY NEW THINGS.

Use this month as an opportunity to try new things and explore activities that you may not have had time for before. This can help distract you from any cravings you may be experiencing and give you a sense of accomplishment.

>CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS.

Completing a dry month is a significant achievement,

so be sure to celebrate your success when you're finished. Treat yourself to something you've been wanting or plan a fun outing with friends to mark the occasion.

Remember, completing a dry month is a personal accomplishment that can lead to positive changes in your life. By setting a goal, planning ahead, finding support, staying hydrated, trying new things, and celebrating your success, you can successfully complete a dry month and reap the benefits of a healthier lifestyle.

Alcohol Addiction: A Complicated but Treatable Disease

Approximately 14.5 million Americans 12 years and older and more than 300 million people worldwide have an alcohol use disorder (AUD) as of 2019. Worldwide, alcohol is responsible for about 3 million deaths each year. Unfortunately, less than 10% of individuals who have an AUD receive any kind of treatment. AUD is defined as a chronic, relapsing disease that occurs when one cannot control their use of alcohol. Besides AUD, alcohol consumption is associated with more than 200 diseases, injuries and other health conditions. This month is Alcohol Awareness Month, dedicated to reducing the stigma surrounding alcoholism and substance abuse and helping organizations reach individuals who may be uncomfortable or in denial of their addiction.



Signs of alcohol abuse may include a combination of physical, behavioral and psychological. Examples of warning signs include the following:

- Having trouble concentrating, loss of coordination and mood swings
- Raised blood pressure, passing out and vomiting
- Being anxious or stressed in social gatherings that do not include alcohol
- Drinking alone
- Making excuses to drink
- Spending a lot of time thinking about drinking
- Excessive amount of time needed to recover from the effects of alcohol consumption
- Needing larger amounts of alcohol to have the desired effects to function “normally”

It can be challenging to be close to a loved one who struggles with alcohol addiction since they may hide it and be dishonest about their consumption which makes it difficult to help them. However, learning about alcohol addiction, researching rehab programs and finding the right way to talk about it can help a loved one with alcohol addiction.

If you or someone you love is struggling with alcoholism, there are numerous ways to seek help.

- Call SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration) available 24/7: 800-662-HELP (4357)
- Visit [findtreatment.gov](https://www.findtreatment.gov) or text your zip code to 435748 to find a treatment facility near you
- Call the American Addiction Centers helpline at 866-484-1712

alcohol.org, ihs.gov, niaaa.nih.gov

Simple, Springtime Cucumber Sandwiches

Prep Time: 10 minutes | Serves: 1

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| 2 ounces cream cheese, room temperature | 1. Stir cream cheese, yogurt, chives, dill and pepper together in a small bowl until well-blended. |
| 1 tablespoon low-fat plain Greek yogurt | 2. Spread mixture evenly on one side of each bread slice. Top one with cucumber slices, then top with the other bread slice, cream cheese-side down. |
| 1 tablespoon sliced fresh chives | 3. Cut the crusts from the sandwich, cut it in half diagonally and enjoy! |
| 1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill | |
| ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper | |
| 2 slices whole-wheat sandwich bread | |
| ⅓ cup thinly sliced English cucumber | |

Nutrition Facts: 358 calories, 22 g total fat, 12 g saturated fat, 439 mg sodium, 29 g carbohydrates, 4 g fiber, 6 g sugar, 12 g protein

Recipe adapted from eatingwell.com