**10 Questions to Ask Yourself About Drinking**



By Bethany Winkel, April 28th 2010

As we’ve talked this whole month, there are many people in our country that abuse alcohol. There are an estimated 14 million alcoholics or alcohol abusers in the United States. But let’s not be so blind to our own actions that we see the alcohol problems around us and forget to look at ourselves. This week, let’s take a long, hard look at our alcohol tendencies, and find out if there is something we need to take care of in our own lives. The questions below will help us determine whether or not we have a drinking problem. For more questions like these, see the Michigan Alcohol Screening Test.

1. Do I have a hard time stopping after 1 or 2 drinks? The recommended guidelines are 2 drinks per day for men and 1 per day for women. Someone who binge drinks is abusing alcohol and putting themselves at risk.

2. Can I go one day without a drink? Alcoholics are dependent on alcohol; therefore they cannot go a day without alcohol or they will suffer serious withdrawal symptoms.

3. Do I drink when lonely, upset, or stressed? Self-medicating with alcohol is a sign of instability, and can lead to alcoholism, depression, and other mental health problems.

4. Do I feel the need to hide my drinking habits? When we know we are abusing alcohol, we may want to keep loved ones from finding out. We may tend to withdraw from people that will look down on our behavior.

5. Do I ever lose consciousness or blackout when drinking? Drinking large amounts of alcohol can cause blackouts as the alcohol effects the body.

6. Do I drink at improper times, or sneak alcohol in where not permitted? Someone that cannot go without alcohol will find ways to sneak it and consume it even when inappropriate.

7. Do I ever drink and drive? There were 17,000 traffic fatalities last year caused by people abusing alcohol.

8. Do family members or friends voice concern about my drinking? Sometimes we can’t see things clearly ourselves, but the concern of a loved one may be accurate.

9. Does my drinking interfere with work or family? As alcohol takes over a person’s life, other things don’t seem as important.

10. Do I think I have a drinking problem? Sometimes it is something we feel deep down and don’t acknowledge out loud.

If you have answered yes to any of these questions, you may have an alcohol problem. Both alcoholism and alcohol abuse are serious and can lead to a life of addiction, or cause injury or death. If you have found that you are using alcohol in an unhealthy way, you may need help. Professionals are ready to give support, treatment, and counseling. Getting help early is the best way to succeed.