# Anger and drinking

Although alcohol is never the primary cause of violence or abuse, it is certainly a contributing factor. Alcohol affects inhibitions and self-control, so an individual can become less aware of normal social limits and they are more likely to lose control of their anger when drinking.



The results can be extremely distressing for both the angry drinker and their loved ones. When the effects of the alcohol wear off, the drinker often feels extreme remorse and guilt that can gradually wear down self-esteem. This can in turn lead to further drinking and the cycle continues. If this is a familiar story to you or your loved ones, it's time to start looking at the issues and taking back control.

**Tips and tools you can use**

Alcohol affects different people differently. Although your friends may be able to have the occasional drink without problems, it's important to recognize that even one drink is too much for some people. If this prospect concerns you, you may want to access addictions support. Meanwhile, here are some tips to help you deal with the situation in the short-term:

**Warning signs**

- Have you recently lost your temper when drinking?
- Do you argue more when you drink?
- Do you become verbally or physically abusive?
- Do you ever shout or throw things when drinking?
- Have you said or done things that you regret once you're sober?
- Are family members or friends concerned about your drinking?

**Self-help**

- Don't be embarrassed to ask for help—you should feel proud that you are taking this important step.
- Talk to your doctor about the situation. Your doctor will recommend the best course of action for you.
- Support groups such as alcoholics anonymous can provide great assistance to both sufferers and family members.
- If you are concerned about violent behaviour, there are many excellent treatment programs. Ask your doctor or a professional.

**Helping a loved one**

- Understand the condition—talk to your doctor or an addiction centre.
- Join a support group for families who are affected by alcohol addiction.
- Discuss the issue when the person is sober.
- Refuse to tolerate abuse—seek help from your local family counselling services centre.
- If your safety is threatened, immediately leave the home and call your local distress centre or crisis line.

Acknowledging that there is an anger issue triggered by alcohol can be a challenge for the drinker, who may also dealing with denial and it can be even more difficult for them to seek help once they overcome their denial. But with the right support and resources the drinker can assess how alcohol affects them and get on the path to a healthier lifestyle.