



New York State Bar Association

One Elk Street, Albany, New York 12207 • 518/463-3200 • <http://www.nysba.org>

Patricia Spataro, Director • Lawyer Assistance Program
800/255-0569 • 518/487-5685 • (FAX) 518/487-5699

FACT SHEET: ALCOHOL USE AMONG ADULTS

- Alcohol accounts for an estimated 97,500 deaths nationally each year.
- In 1980, alcohol problems cost society \$90 billion in health care and lost productivity--or nearly as much as did drug abuse and mental illness combined (\$101 billion).
- The greatest single health hazard from alcohol is liver disease. Cirrhosis of the liver caused 28,000 deaths nationally in 1983, and was the ninth leading cause of death.
- Nearly half of all violent deaths are alcohol-related, and the victims are intoxicated in about one-third of all drownings, homicides, boating deaths and aviation deaths, and one-fourth of all suicides.
- Nearly half of all convicted jail inmates were under the influence of alcohol at the time of the offense, and nearly half of that group were drunk.
- Alcohol is involved in an estimated 45-60 percent of reported incidents of domestic violence, 50 percent of jail suicides, and 40 percent of Family Court cases.
- Driving while intoxicated is the most frequently prosecuted crime in America, with 1.6 million cases nationally in 1986.
- Repeat offenders made up 28% of all DWI/DWAI convictions in New York State in 1985.
- Employees suffering from alcohol or drug abuse have five times the average sick and accident health claims, double the absentee rate, and three to five times as many on-the-job accidents.
- Treating alcohol and drug abuse problems is cost-effective, resulting in improved performance and lower health claims for the employee, and usually also for the family (65-85% of workers referred for treatment, return to the job as productive employees).

****Information provided by The New York State Office of Alcoholism and Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services**

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