



DRUG & ALCOHOL

APRIL 2023



Alcohol and Drugs on Board 3

Alcohol, Drugs, and Physical Health 5

Alcohol, Drugs, and Mental Health 6

Oceanic's Recommendations 6

Alcohol and Drugs on Board

According to the **International Maritime Organization (IMO)**, seafarers are highly susceptible to the use of drugs and alcohol. Being away from family with limited social interaction, work-related stress, long working hours, and shifts, are some of the reasons which determine seafarers a risky and one of the most hazardous occupations.

Shipping companies have applied **Drug & Alcohol Policy** which must be strictly followed by all personnel on ship vessels. The alcohol consumption on board, depends on each shipping company, whilst drugs or other abused substances are strictly prohibited on all vessels. All personnel on ship vessels should be well aware of the alcohol and drugs regulation.

According to the Drug & Alcohol policy, alcohol consumption is strictly prohibited while on board and prior start working if coming back from shore leave, to ensure that, in case of emergency, all personnel will be alerted to correspond promptly and effectively. Random alcohol and drug testing is encouraged to ensure there is no breach in the policy. Nevertheless, disciplinary actions or dismissal will be applied for those who fail to follow this policy.

Alcohol Consumption

Excessive alcohol consumption is a causal factor in more than 200 disease and injury conditions. (WHO)

About 3 million deaths happen every year worldwide, because of excessive alcohol consumption. (WHO)

Alcohol consumption is linked with mental and behavioural disorders, noncommunicable conditions such as liver cirrhosis, cancer, and cardiovascular disease, and injuries. (WHO)

Alcohol consumption or drug abuse on board has safety implications of the vessel, crew, and passengers.

Seafaring has been identified as a high stress occupation. High stress levels have been associated with alcohol consumption, which if left untreated, will lead to medical and psychological problems. (NIH)

A study in 2018, showed that 10–30% of seafarers consumed alcohol at work, whilst an average of 14.5% were risky drinkers. (Pougnnet et al., 2014)

Drug Abuse

Drug addiction can cause serious health issues, and other problems such as issues with family, friends, and co-workers. (Harvard)

Drugs affect many brain areas that are necessary for life-sustaining functions such as eating, socializing, anxiety, thinking, planning, problems solving and decisions making. (NIH)

In 2010, **IMO** has set some preventive measures for alcohol consumption. Alcohol limits have been set at 0.05% blood alcohol or 0.25mg/L breath alcohol for all employees that handle protection, safety, and environmental protection tasks.

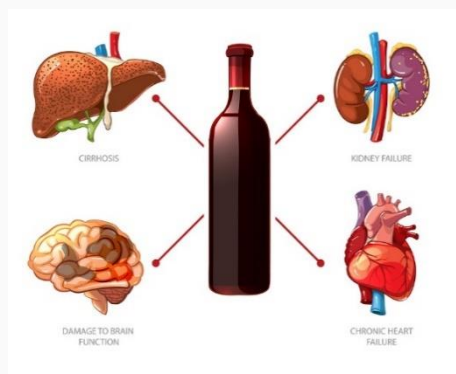


How alcohol and drugs affect physical health?

Alcohol and Physical Health

Excessive alcohol consumption results in several health issues:

- **Brain**
Mood, behaviour, clear thinking and move coordination are all altered due to alcohol consumption.
- **Heart**
Heavy drinking can damage heart resulting in several issues such as cardiomyopathy (stretching and drooping of heart muscle), arrhythmias, stroke, and high blood pressure (i.e., hypertension).
- **Liver**
Prolonged heavy drinking affects liver, causing several health issues and inflammation. Steatosis, or fatty liver, is the most common alcohol-related liver disease. Additionally, other diseases such as alcoholic hepatitis, fibrosis, or cirrhosis might be caused.
- **Pancreas**
Pancreatitis is another condition that can be cause by heavy drinking. It is the inflammation of the pancreas blood vessels, which can prevent proper digestion.
- **Cancer**
Alcohol is linked with many cancer types such as head and neck, liver, oesophageal, breast and colorectal cancers. The more the alcohol consumed, the higher the cancers' risks.
- **Immune System**
Alcohol consumption weakens the immune system, making it harder for human body to fight off infections.



Drugs and Physical Health

Drug abuse comes with serious health issues:

- Health issues associated with drug abuse include lung disease, heart disease, stroke, cancer and even death.
- Drugs may also damage nerve cells in brain or nervous system causing serious health problems.
- Endocarditis can be caused by drug injections, in which heart and its valves, are infected after exposure to certain bacteria.

How alcohol and drugs affect mental health?

Alcohol and Mental Health

Alcohol consumption affects mental health:

- Long-term excessive alcohol consumption might cause anxiety disorder.
- If drinking large amounts of alcohol for a long period of time and suddenly stop, will increase anxiety, and cause symptoms, such as trembling hands, sweating, high heart rate, hallucinations, nausea, vomiting, and seizures.
- High alcohol consumption can cause depression. People that consume up to fourteen drinks or more per week, have increased depression risk. Additionally, the more the drinks, the higher the depression risk. (Gemes K. et al., 2019)

Drugs and Mental Health

Drug abuse affects mental health negatively:

- Drug abuse can cause mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia.
- Drug abuse can also worsen mental disorders already occurred.

Oceanic recommends:

Oceanic suggests avoiding all level of alcohol consumption and drug misuse as both will affect all life's aspects whilst increasing both physical and mental health risks.



 Oceanic

Your committed
hospitality & wellbeing
partner at sea.

www.oceanic-services.com

© Oceanic, April 2023