

Reflecting on Dry January

◆ A Fresh Start

As January comes to a close, many who participated in Dry January may be asking: "How can I maintain these positive changes?" Originally called "Dry January" when it began in 2013 in the UK, this month-long challenge encourages a break from alcohol, offering an opportunity to reset habits, and explore life which some might call "sober curious."

Participants in Dry January often report benefits such as better sleep, improved moods, reduced caloric intake, and mental clarity. Beyond these immediate benefits, research shows that completing Dry January can enhance self-efficacy and foster lasting reductions in alcohol consumption. While January may be over, the journey to better health doesn't have to end here.



◆ Sustaining the Benefits

Maintaining the momentum you built in Dry January is essential for long-term health improvements. Consider these strategies to keep reaping the rewards:

- **Limit Accessibility** - Keep your home free of alcohol to limit temptation.
- **Explore Alternatives** - Opt for water (sparkling or still), natural juices, or non-alcoholic drinks (i.e., mocktails).
- **Set Goals** - Decide how alcohol fits into your lifestyle and commit to mindful consumption.
- **Stay Connected** - Seek the support of friends, family, and community.
- **Focus on Health** - Keep a balanced diet, exercise, and sleep routine.

♦ Articles

- STUDY CONFIRMS BENEFITS OF DRY JANUARY



- THE IARC PERSPECTIVE ON ALCOHOL REDUCTION OR CESSATION & CANCER RISK



- SHOULD YOU TRY DRY JANUARY?



♦ Benefits of Reducing Alcohol

- Increases mental clarity
- Improves sleep
- Boosts mood
- Strengthens immune system
- Saves money
- Boosts heart health
- Balances hormones
- Decreases inflammation
- Supports digestive health
- Facilitates liver function
- Improves skin
- Enhances hair health
- Increases libido
- Decreases risk of certain cancers

RESOURCES AT USM

If you or someone you know is struggling with their mental health and/or substance use, here are some on-campus resources:

Screen U - An anonymous, confidential, and free screening to help you understand your level of risk – available on USM's Counseling Services website.

USM Counseling Services - Schedule an appointment with a counselor or sign up for a **BASICS** session (Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students).

The ROCC (Recovery-Oriented Campus Center) - A collegiate recovery program which assists and inspires student success via academic pursuits and personal journey.

FOR COMMENTS ON THIS NEWSLETTER OR SUGGESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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