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Articles

How Dry January became the Wordle of the resolution World



LA Times Today: Can Dry January lead to 'mindful drinking'?



Health experts explain benefits of Dry January



Tasty mocktails for Dry January and beyond



Substance Misuse Prevention Newsletter: A Collection of Readings

Dry January



<https://stories.camden.rutgers.edu/dry-january/assets/kyMGvNuGA8/dryjanuary-1920x1080-1920x1080.jpg>

Brief Overview

'Dry January' is a public health campaign that originated in the UK in 2013 (Russell et al., 2022). The goal of those who choose to participate is to temporarily abstain from alcohol during the month of January. Some see it as an attainable new year's resolution, while others find that it leads to a new habit of mindful drinking. Prior studies have shown that participation in Dry January has resulted in short-term and long-term benefits. These benefits include a reduction in alcohol consumption, an increase in alcohol refusal skills, saving money, improved sleep, increased energy, weight loss, and enhancement in overall psychological wellbeing (Russell et al., 2022). Because of these benefits, the trend has become increasingly popular since its inception.

Common barriers to achieving abstinence (Pennay et al., 2018)

- Stress and tiredness
- Frequency of drinking in social life
- Negative effects from not drinking
- Negative reactions from others

Strategies to reduce alcohol consumption (Pennay et al., 2018)

- Engaging in social events with others who are practicing abstinence
- Self-talk
- Engaging in non-alcohol related activities
- Substituting alcohol with other drinks or 'mocktails'



1: https://www.heart.org/-/media/Images/News/2023/January-2023/0103DryJanuary_Infographic_SC.jpg

Voluntary abstinence during Dry January and subsequent alcohol use

A study done by O de Visser et al. (2016) examined what the predictors were of a successful Dry January as well as how the success or failure of this planned abstinence affected subsequent alcohol consumption. The participants of this study included 249 men and 608 women. Results showed that success during Dry January was more common for individuals who entered the period of abstinence with lower levels of alcohol consumption during the month prior. Regardless of participants' success with Dry January, participation resulted in reductions of alcohol consumption and increases in drink refusal self-efficacy (DRSE) during the six-month follow up. These results suggest that engaging in periods of voluntary abstinence may be associated with healthier drinking habits. It is also worth noting that very few participants in this study reported increased alcohol consumption after their period of abstinence (O de Visser et al., 2016).

For comments on this newsletter or suggestions for future articles please contact: Diane Geyer LCPC, LADC, CCS, NCC~ Clinician and Coordinator of Clinical Substance Use Services at USM or Mary Furlong, Graduate Assistant~ Email: diane.geyer@maine.edu or mary.furlong@maine.edu