

Medical Impact of Underage Drinking



- Alcohol, a central nervous system depressant, is the most commonly abused drug among youth
- Youth who use alcohol before the age of 15 are five times more likely to become alcohol dependent than those who start drinking at age 21
- Brain development is not complete until a person is in their early 20s; alcohol use during this crucial period can impair healthy brain development.
- Alcohol use by youth increases the risk of dangerous behaviors:
 - Fatal and non-fatal injuries
 - Suicide and homicide
 - Sexual behaviors
 - Poor school performance
 - Aggression
- People under the age of 21 drink 11% of all alcohol consumed in the United States; 90% of this consumption is through binge drinking.

Data was obtained from the Centers for Disease Control www.cdc.gov/alcohol/quickstats/underage_drinking.htm

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