

Alcohol

Many health conditions and risks associated with 22q11.2 deletion syndrome (22q) can be made worse by drinking alcohol.



Tips for young adults

- No alcohol at all is best. A small amount of alcohol (1-2 small drinks) on a special occasion is okay (e.g. special holiday, birthday).
- If you plan to have a drink, ensure that you are in a safe place to do so (e.g. at home).
- If you are pregnant, or trying to get pregnant, do not drink alcohol at all. It can harm your baby.
- If you are taking medications, ask your doctor if it is safe to drink with those medications. Do **not** stop taking your medications to have a drink.

Tips for caregivers

- Try to delay the onset of drinking for your young adult as long as possible.
- Recognize that drinking alcohol is a risk and discuss safety concerns with a member of your young adult's health-care team.
- Be aware of signs of problematic alcohol use (e.g. vomiting, coming home drunk, smelling like alcohol, missing school or social events, withdrawing from family or friends, etc.)
- Remember – mistakes with alcohol can happen, no matter how much guidance you provide.
- Guide your young adult to appropriate supports and resources. If you don't know – ask for help from a member of your young adult's health-care team.

Did you know...

- Alcohol intake may trigger or worsen low calcium, a common condition in 22q that can cause seizures.
- Alcohol can increase the risk of other physical and mental health problems.
- Drinking increases your chance of risky behaviours and acting impulsively, which can lead to making bad choices/getting in trouble.
- Alcohol can harm the way the body and brain develop.

Alcohol: Could it be a problem for me?

Have you had any of the following?

- Feelings that you should cut down your drinking.
- Been told that you need to cut down your drinking.
- Had a drink of alcohol first thing in the morning.
- Tried to stop or cut your drinking, but not been able to do this.
- Gotten into trouble when you were drinking.

If you answered yes to any of the above, you may want to talk to your doctor, a member of your health-care team or someone you feel comfortable with.

RISKS: Alcohol can...

- damage your brain
- damage a baby's brain
- get you into trouble
- trigger or worsen low calcium levels
- make you gain weight
- cause or worsen your acne

Please contact us if you have any questions

22q Deletion Syndrome Clinic

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www.sickkids.ca/CGenetics/What-we-do/22q-deletion-syndrome-clinic/

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This fact sheet was produced in collaboration with the **Good 2 Go Transition Program** at The Hospital for Sick Children. www.sickkids.ca/good2go/

Note: 22q11.2 deletion syndrome ("22q" or "22q11.2DS") has also been known as DiGeorge syndrome, velocardiofacial syndrome, and many other names. For more information, please visit www.22q.org/awareness-events/awareness/same-name-campaign/.