Facts about drinking and the use of Alcohol

* There is no way to sober up except through time. Cold showers, coffee, and inhaling pure oxygen don't work. If a person drinks enough black coffee, he/she may become nervous and wakeful, but he/she is still drunk. Nothing will shorten the time it takes the body to oxidize the alcohol. Most of the work is done by the liver, which oxidizes the alcohol. This requires about one hour for each ounce of alcohol consumed. This process is rather slow, because it is hard work for the liver. That's why so many people with drinking problems also develop liver problems.

* If you dilute drinks with water, it will slow down the rate of absorption, and if you drink too much you'll still get drunk, but more slowly. Diluting drinks makes more liquid volume so they'll last longer.

* Beer and wine have slower affects.

* Drinking while you're tense may affect the speed at which you drink. Relaxing may help you slow down your drinking.

* Eating some food before and while drinking will lessen the effect to a degree, especially because it may help you cut down the volume of alcohol you consume.

* The decision to drink any alcoholic beverage is your choice alone. Learn to say "no" to those who push you into drinking more than you should.

* You can set a limit of the number of drinks you will consume at a gathering and stop when, or before, you reach that limit. Others can make their own decisions about continuing to drink; you don't need to match them.

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Derived from a website publication (http://www.counsel.ufl/CounselNet/cnetfight.htm) developed by the University of Florida Counseling Center (1999).
Most people who drink, and don't overdose, don't get drunk. They don't depend upon alcohol to get them through the day and they don't become addicted to alcohol. However, for over ten million Americans, alcohol has become a habit-forming, addictive drug. At least that many Americans are alcoholics and even more have heavy drinking problems. When we think of alcoholism, we tend to think of the skid row bum, but he's not the typical alcoholic. Only three to five percent of alcoholic Americans are on skid row. The rest look like us and our neighbors.

Why are there so many drinking problems? Partly because there are some myths about drinking.

**MYTHS**

- **Getting drunk is funny.**
  Maybe it's funny in the movies or on TV, but in real life getting drunk is rather sad. It's a form of getting sick and losing control over our minds and bodies. Drunkenness is no funnier than indigestion, flu or diarrhea. The interesting fact is that in societies where getting drunk is not accepted with laughter as it is here, the incidence of the problem is much less.

- **Drinking is very grownup, sophisticated or “cool.”**
  This is nonsense, yet this belief has caused a lot of foolish behavior, a lot of drinking problems and a lot of deaths on our highways.