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## Healthy Alternatives to Drugs & Alcohol

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### Comments:

You're probably thinking, :Here we go again:another Toolbox Talk on the risks and hazards of drugs and alcohol misuse.: And yeah, we all know the dangers of **substance misuse**: addiction, liver damage, cancer, heart disease, poor decision-making, family and legal troubles: the list goes on.

But let's take a different approach today.

Instead of focusing only on **why you, or someone you care about shouldn't** drink in excess or use drugs, let's talk about **what you, or they, can do instead**:healthy alternatives that support a healthy life, stronger mind, and safer workplace.

## Healthy alternatives to drugs & alcohol

Whether you're trying to cut back, quit completely, live a healthier life, or know someone who is in recovery, here are some real options that may help you, or someone you may know:

### Physical Alternatives:

Go for a walk, run, or hike (release endorphins naturally.)

Hit the gym or join a fitness class.

Try yoga or stretching to relax your body and mind.

Play a sport or join a rec league.

Take on a home project or DIY task.

### **Mental/Emotional Alternatives:**

Meditate or practice deep breathing exercises. (Especially helpful as a bedtime routine.) Alexa has free guided meditations just say, :Alexa play a guided sleep meditation.: A great resource for those of us with trouble falling asleep.

Journal your thoughts, gratitude, or daily wins. Try making a to-do list before bed, to help quiet your mind when falling asleep.

Read an inspiring book or listen to a helpful podcast.

Volunteer:helping others is a natural mood booster.

Talk to someone you trust (coworker, friend, or therapist.)

### **Tips for staying on track (or getting back on track) and why it feels hard at first:**

When you're newly sober, being in social situations can feel like stepping into unfamiliar territory. Old habits can creep in:after all, many past social events may have revolved around drinking. Seeing others with a drink in hand **or** being offered one can trigger cravings, and without alcohol as a **:social icebreaker**,: it's easy to feel **awkward or out of place**. But don't fear, this feeling gets easier with time as you navigate your new normal.

You might also worry about what others will think if you turn down a drink, and the emotional ups and downs of early recovery can make it even more challenging. The good news is, you can still enjoy social settings while staying on track.

Bring your own non-alcoholic drink so you're not tempted, go with a supportive friend who understands your goals, and have a simple, confident response ready:like :No thanks, I:m good.:

If you know someone who doesn't drink, be supportive by not offering them one!

Choose events that **focus on activities instead of alcohol** and give yourself permission **to leave early if you start feeling uncomfortable**. Every time you get through a social event sober, you're building strength, creating your new normal, and proving to yourself that you can do it. Focus on the :why::whether it's your family, health, career, or peace of mind.

### **Support & recovery resources**

**SAMHSA National Helpline** Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (free & confidential): 1-800-662-HELP (4357) |<https://www.samhsa.gov/>

**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):** <https://www.aa.org/>

**Narcotics Anonymous (NA):** <https://na.org/>

**Smart Recovery:** [smartrecovery.org](http://smartrecovery.org)

Local 7 provides inpatient rehabilitation services through Aetna at 80% coverage in-network and 70% out-of-network.

Join on Thursdays 8pm ET for the Heat & Frost Recovery Group ZOOM ID 232 344 0706

Other Helpful Resources - Free, confidential, 24/7/365

[Rethinking Drinking](#)

[NIAAA Alcohol Treatment Navigator](#)

[Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration](#) or 1-800-662 HELP (4357)

**Mocktails are becoming increasingly popular, offering a delicious and inclusive option for everyone to enjoy! Try providing alternatives at your next function for your designated drivers, those in recovery, or those who may want an alternative to alcoholic beverages.**

**Easy mocktail recipe: Apple Ginger Spritz**

**Ingredients:**

½ cup chilled apple cider (non-alcoholic)

¼ cup ginger beer (non-alcoholic)

1 tablespoon lemon juice

Ice cubes

Apple slice & cinnamon stick for garnish

**Instructions:**

Fill a glass with ice.

Pour in apple cider, ginger beer, and lemon juice.

Stir and garnish with an apple slice and cinnamon stick.

**Non-alcoholic beers to try**

Get the taste: without the alcohol, hangover, or risk:

**Heineken 0.0**

**Athletic Brewing Co.** : great for craft lovers

**Budweiser Zero**

**Clausthaler Dry-Hopped NA**

**Lagunitas IPNA (non-alcoholic IPA)**

## **Remember This!**

Choosing sobriety, cutting back, or being supportive of someone that is: means showing up for life fully, not missing out. Remember there's always support. You're never alone' stay strong, stay safe, and remember to live a healthy life on your terms.