

The Potential Risks and Consequences of Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD)

Ratna Sinath*

Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, Connecticut, USA

DESCRIPTION

Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) is a chronic condition characterized by the excessive and compulsive consumption of alcohol, leading to physical and psychological dependence. It is essential to recognize and understand the risks associated with AUD to raise awareness, promote prevention, and encourage early intervention. This note aims to explore the various risks and consequences of alcohol use disorder on physical health, mental well-being, and social functioning.

Physical health risks

Liver damage: One of the most well-known risks of AUD is liver damage. Prolonged and excessive alcohol consumption can lead to conditions like alcoholic hepatitis, fatty liver disease, and cirrhosis, which can ultimately result in liver failure [1].

Cardiovascular complications: AUD increases the risk of developing cardiovascular diseases, including high blood pressure, irregular heart rhythm, heart attacks, and strokes. Chronic alcohol abuse weakens the heart muscle, leading to cardiomyopathy and an increased likelihood of heart failure.

Gastrointestinal issues: Alcohol irritates the lining of the digestive system, leading to conditions like gastritis, ulcers, and gastrointestinal bleeding. AUD is also associated with an increased risk of pancreatitis, a painful inflammation of the pancreas [2].

Increased cancer risk: Long-term alcohol abuse is a significant risk factor for several types of cancer, including liver, mouth, throat, esophageal, colorectal and breast cancer. The risk increases with higher levels of alcohol consumption.

Mental health risks

Depression and anxiety: Alcohol use disorder often co-occurs with mental health disorders like depression and anxiety. While alcohol may temporarily alleviate symptoms, it exacerbates these conditions in the long run [3]. AUD can interfere with the effectiveness of mental health treatments and impede the recovery process.

Cognitive impairment: Chronic alcohol abuse can lead to cognitive impairments, including memory problems, difficulty concentrating, and impaired decision-making abilities. It may also increase the risk of developing neurological disorders like dementia and Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome [4].

Increased suicidal thoughts and behaviors: Individuals with AUD are at a higher risk of experiencing suicidal thoughts and engaging in self-harm or suicide attempts. Alcohol's depressive effects, coupled with impaired judgment and impulsivity, can contribute to these behaviours.

Social and interpersonal risks

Legal issues: Alcohol-related behaviours, such as Driving Under the Influence (DUI), public intoxication, and violence, can result in legal consequences, including arrests, fines, and imprisonment [5]. Legal issues further compound the challenges faced by individuals with AUD.

Occupational and financial consequences: Alcohol abuse can negatively impact work performance, leading to absenteeism, reduced productivity, and even job loss. Financial stability may also be compromised due to increased spending on alcohol and the inability to meet financial obligations.

Accidents and injuries: Impaired judgment and coordination associated with AUD increase the risk of accidents and injuries. Alcohol-related accidents, such as falls, motor vehicle crashes, and violence, can have severe physical and legal ramifications.

CONCLUSION

AUD poses significant risks to physical health, mental well-being, and social functioning. Recognizing these risks is crucial in addressing AUD, promoting prevention efforts, and providing appropriate treatment and support. Early intervention, access to comprehensive treatment programs, and on-going support can help individuals overcome the challenges of AUD and improve their overall quality of life.

Correspondence to: Ratna Sinath, Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, Connecticut, USA, E-mail: ratna.sinath@yale.edu

Received: 05-Jun-2023, Manuscript No. JALDD-23-24942; **Editor assigned:** 07-Jun-2023, Pre QC No. JALDD-23-24942 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 21-Jun-2023, QC No. JALDD-23-24942; **Revised:** 28-Jun-2023, Manuscript No. JALDD-23-24942 (R); **Published:** 05-Jul-2023, DOI: 10.35248/2329-6488.23.11.386.

Citation: Sinath R (2023) The Potential Risks and Consequences of Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD). J Alcohol Drug Depend.11:386.

Copyright: © 2023 Sinath R. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

REFERENCES

1. Griswold MG, Fullman N, Hawley C, Arian N, Zimsen SR, Tymeson HD, et al. Alcohol use and burden for 195 countries and territories, 1990-2016: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016. *The Lancet*. 2018;392(10152):1015-35.
2. Courtney KE, Polich J. Binge drinking in young adults: Data, definitions, and determinants. *Psychol Bull*. 2009;135(1):142.
3. Uekermann J, Daum I. Social cognition in alcoholism: a link to prefrontal cortex dysfunction? *Addiction*. 2008;103(5):726-35.
4. Wilson SR, Fink A, Verghese S, Beck JC, Nguyen K, Lavori P. Adding an alcohol-related risk score to an existing categorical risk classification for older adults: Sensitivity to group differences. *J Am Geriatr Soc*. 2007;55(3):445-50.
5. Babor TF, Aguirre-Molina M, Marlatt GA, Clayton R. Managing alcohol problems and risky drinking. *Am J Health Promot*. 1999;14(2):98-103.