



For Immediate Release:

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Almost-Dry January:

A New Year's challenge from the Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society

Rethinking your drinking is always a good idea, and as we learned from last year's release of [Canada's Safe Drinking Guidelines](#), less is better. People who take part in the Dry January movement – stopping drinking for the month – report that they experience all kinds of health benefits: better mood, better sleep, better skin and better relationships.

But Dry January is not for everyone. In fact, for people who drink heavily or who have been diagnosed with alcohol use disorder, stopping cold turkey after the holidays can pose a serious health risk.

“Almost-Dry January encourages people to set a goal to safely reduce their consumption but not necessarily stop drinking or stop drinking right away,” says Izabela Szelest, Chief Scientific Officer for the Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society. “Research shows that less is better, and any reduction can bring health benefits.”

If you're thinking about *Almost-Dry January*, start with these simple planning tips:

1. Consult your physician or care provider and make a plan to safely reduce consumption
2. Educate yourself about new treatment options available to curb cravings
3. Set your goals: How many drinks per day? Per week? What kind of drink?
4. Seek support from friends, family, or professional services such as counselling
5. Set up new mood-boosting activities to replace your old ones
6. Avoid 'all or nothing' thinking. Know ahead of time, that you're not a failure if you slip, or need to reset goals
7. Keep a journal to track your progress
8. Go easy on yourself – wanting to create change is a huge first step
9. Check out cauds.org for more information on starting a care journey for alcohol use disorder

Follow us on [X](#) and [Facebook](#), or check out cauds.org/almost-dry-jan to find tips and words of encouragement throughout the month of January, whether you choose to be Dry or *Almost-Dry*.

For more information and for interview opportunities:

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Almost Dry January image attached



BACKGROUNDER

About the Canadian Alcohol Use Disorder Society

We are a national non-profit, which advocates for a more effective and compassionate approach to treating alcohol use disorder as a health condition.

We formed in 2020 in Penticton, BC and are proud to collaborate with a variety of healthcare organizations and community groups, and to be supported by the Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen, the BC Ministry of Health and the BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions.

Alcohol Use Disorder:

- is a health condition affecting the brain, causing some people to intensely crave alcohol. These individuals are compelled to drink, to drink too much, and to not be able to stop even if that means harming relationships, family connections or employment opportunities.
- can be mild, moderate or severe.
- can be triggered by biological or environmental factors or by life experience, and can affect anyone at any point in their life.
- is one of the most prevalent and most harmful conditions in Canada: 18% of Canadians will be affected by alcohol use disorder over the course of their lifetime.
- deserves compassion and is NOT a moral failing or a sign of weakness.

Treatment Options:

Several medications are available that can curb or eliminate cravings for alcohol.

- Medications are:
 - prescribed by a family doctor or nurse practitioner as part of an overall care plan.
 - selected based upon an individual's consumption history and their personal drinking goals.
 - taken temporarily until the brain heals.
- Treatment:
 - is tailored to an individual's drinking goals. This can be to stop drinking altogether or simply to reduce the amount a person drinks. It does not require abstinence.
 - complements and provides stability for counselling and many other types of important care services and supports.
 - allows for a full recovery for just about everyone.

Turning a Compulsion Back into a Choice:

New [Canadian low-risk drinking guidelines](#) underscore WHY drinking less is better, advising that 2 drinks per week reduces the risk of health problems and several types of cancer. We aim to help people reach their drinking goals by providing information on the HOW.