

How a 'Dry January' could help your health

January 8 2023, by Cara Murez



Having a "dry January," or giving up alcohol for the first month of the year, is a trend.

And it's not a bad idea, according to a drug and alcohol rehab counselor with Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.

Not consuming alcohol can have many [health benefits](#), said [Alan Berki](#), from sleeping better and having more time for other hobbies to saving money.

"The condition of your skin, the increased amount of energy that you have, if you're not replacing the alcohol with candy or sweets—because you may start to crave those a little more if you stop drinking—you'll definitely experience weight loss," Berki said.

One group should not take part, Berki cautioned. Those are heavy drinkers, who should talk with their doctors first because withdrawal symptoms can be uncomfortable and possibly deadly.

For those who are not [heavy drinkers](#), Berki suggested this time could be a good opportunity to reflect on drinking habits and write down goals.

When not giving up drinking, men should consume no more than two drinks and women should only have one on days when alcohol is consumed, according to [government dietary guidelines](#) for Americans.

Be sure to have [social support](#) and avoid temptations, Berki added in a clinic news release.

"The number one thing to do is if they're trying to do a dry January and they truly don't want to drink, the best thing to do is to avoid the situations, so if at all possible not hang out in bars, or nightclubs, or go to parties where there is going to be heavy alcohol use," he advised.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [alcohol use](#).

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Citation: How a 'Dry January' could help your health (2023, January 8) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-01-dry-january-health.html>

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