



motion picture
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SOCIAL SERVICES CORNER

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A HEALTHY CUP OF HOLIDAY CHEER

Question: My folks, both in their eighties, come over for holiday meals. We have cocktails followed by wine with dinner. Should I limit their alcohol? If so, how?

Answer: That depends on many factors, including those that are physical, medical and social.

First, there is no magic time in one's life to stop drinking or to suggest an aging parent do so. However, it is a scientifically accepted fact that as we age our bodies metabolize alcohol differently than when we were younger. Hence, the physiological effects of one drink, or one type of drink, might catch us off guard. In your fifties or in your eighties, you cannot drink like you did in your twenties!

Second, medication interaction and interference should be assessed. Alcohol, combined with certain medications, can be very dangerous to the liver, heart and brain. Some medications lose their effectiveness when combined with alcohol, and some may have a heightened effect. Since alcohol stays in the body for several hours, this is something to be aware of if drinking starts at cocktail hour and continues through dinner, and is followed by bedtime pills.

Third, consider additional risks. Are your parents driving themselves home? Have they had a fall, or do

you think they might? Older folks are already at risk for falls because of vision and balance losses.

Approaching another adult about his or her alcohol consumption can be tricky. Are your parents able to monitor their own alcohol intake? Do you know what medications they're on? Can you talk openly with them?

If you are concerned about an older relative drinking too much alcohol (becoming intoxicated), you should first try to talk about the issue privately. Convey concern without accusing. If you are hosting, shorten the cocktail hour, then serve water at the table before opening the wine. Serve small wine pours during dinner, and skip any after-dinner drinks. Allow extra time in the scheduled event to metabolize any alcohol.

We've learned lately of the potential health effects of having a drink a day, even into later adulthood. Moderation and safety will be your guides. You are also an adult, and you can be a role model to the generations before and after you.

Sources: Any adult with a drinking problem can contact Alcoholics Anonymous at www.aa.org for a directory. Loved ones can check out Al-Anon ((888) 4AL-ANON, www.al-anon.org). "Alcohol Use and Older Adults," <http://nihseniorhealth.gov/alcoholuse/alcoholandaging/01.html>.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

"The Supreme Court ruled against having a Nativity scene in Washington, D.C. This wasn't for religious reasons.

They couldn't find three wise men and a virgin."

**—Jay Leno, *The Friars Club Encyclopedia of Jokes*,
H. Aaron Cohl**

Laughter is known to boost the immune system, lower blood pressure, burn calories and release pleasure-inducing chemicals in the brain.

Go Green!

Receive Social Services Corner by email.

Call (888) 994-3863, ext. 2370,

or email info@wrmail.org.

Do you or does someone you know need our assistance? Call toll-free (888) 994-3863 or visit www.wrpioneers.org to find out more about our assistance programs.



The Motion Picture Pioneers Assistance Fund is a program of the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation.



IS HEARING LOSS AFFECTING YOU?



The feeling that you are losing your hearing is scary. People deny it for as long as they can, but it doesn't go away. According to the National Institute of Deafness and

Other Communication Disorders, hearing loss begins in midlife. Very fine hairs in the inner ear lose elasticity with age and are less effective at conducting sound waves. Years of exposure to loud noises contribute to hearing loss. Genetics plays a role too. Consider these symptoms to learn whether you or someone you know may be losing their hearing.

1. Do you strain to hear a conversation or ask your partner to repeat himself or herself?
2. Do you turn up the volume on the TV or phone?
3. Are you avoiding social situations because it's too hard to hear or talk?
4. Is it difficult to understand the higher voices of children or women?

Sources: "Age-related Hearing Loss," <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001045.htm>. www.nidcd.nih.gov or 1-800-241-1044.

5. Are you having trouble filtering out background noise in order to hear the person next to you?

Hearing loss can be challenging socially as well. Here are five strategies to try if you think you are losing your hearing.

1. Get tested by a professional audiologist. Get a baseline and be retested annually.
2. Inform others how they can help you. Ask friends to face you or slow down when talking to you.
3. Find what works for you. If a bar is too loud, frequent a quiet restaurant. If you can't talk to your spouse with the TV on, turn it off.
4. Investigate assistive technology. Check out amplifiers if you aren't ready for a hearing aid.
5. Process the loss emotionally. It's normal to feel frustrated or even sorry for yourself, but don't be overwhelmed. It's not your fault.

Hearing loss can be alarming, but you will adapt and you can cope, as long as you acknowledge and accept this common age-related change.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE MPPAF'S NATIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Eldercare Locator, www.eldercare.gov, (800) 677-1116

The Eldercare Locator website offers free listings of local senior services such as home repair, in-home services, housing options, nursing homes and long-term care, transportation, meal programs, adult day care centers, and contact information for state and local agencies. The website also offers fact sheets, publications, links and other useful information about senior services.

www.seniorhousingnet.com, (800) 525-2546

The Senior Housing Net website is operated by Move, Inc., a for-profit real estate website company designed for consumers and real estate professionals. It offers a full range of senior housing options, including 55+ housing, independent and assisted living, Alzheimer's care, continuing care, and low-income affordable housing, and it can be accessed by state, city or ZIP code.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Let's be honest with ourselves and not take ourselves too serious, and never condemn the other fellow for doing what we're doing every day, only in a different way.”

—Will Rogers



To view our entire National Resource Directory, please visit www.wr pioneers.org.