



Highlight of the Month

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about the risks surrounding alcohol use and treatments available for those who suffer from alcohol misuse. Alcohol consumption is a major, yet often under recognized, contributor to cancer and metabolic [risks](#). According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), alcohol is classified as a Group 1 carcinogen, placing it in the same category as tobacco and asbestos. Even low levels of consumption can raise the risk of developing cancer. The most common alcohol-related cancers include those of the mouth, throat, larynx, esophagus, liver, breast, and colon. One of the key mechanisms by which alcohol contributes to cancer is through its metabolism into acetaldehyde, a toxic chemical that can damage DNA and hinder the body's ability to repair it. Alcohol can also act as a solvent, making it easier for other carcinogens (like those in tobacco smoke) to enter cells. Furthermore, alcohol influences hormone levels, particularly estrogen, which may explain the increased breast cancer risk in women who drink.

Beyond cancer, alcohol use is also closely linked to ectopic fat accumulation — fat that is stored in and around vital organs rather than under the skin. A 2023 [study](#) supported by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) found that higher alcohol intake is associated with increased fat deposits around the heart, liver, pancreas, and kidneys. This type of fat, especially around the liver, a condition known as alcoholic fatty liver disease, can lead to inflammation, fibrosis, cirrhosis, and ultimately liver cancer. Around the heart, such fat deposits increase the risk of cardiovascular disease by promoting inflammation and impairing heart function.

Some signs that a person may have developed alcohol dependence include developing a tolerance (needing to drink more to get the same effect as one once did), unsuccessful attempts to cut down on drinking, craving alcohol, and neglecting responsibilities at work or home. If you or someone you know is showing these signs of alcohol dependence, recovery is possible.

There is free, confidential 24/7 support at 1-800-662-HELP (4357) or visit the website at www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov for resources.

Primary Prevention

Prescription Drug Take Back Day, 26 April 2025, is an opportunity to safely dispose of unused or expired medications. It provides a secure, anonymous way to turn in prescription drugs at designated [collection locations](#). Removing unused medications from your home reduces the risk of accidental poisoning and misuse by others, including children, guests, or even fellow Sailors. It also helps prevent the temptation to self-medicate or share prescription drugs, both of which can have legal and health consequences.

Let's work together by disposing of your unused prescription drugs safely and encourage others to do the same. This proactive step also supports operational readiness by minimizing the chances of substance-related incidents that could impact mission effectiveness.

ALL military pharmacies in the United States and U.S. Territories offer one or both of the following [Drug Take Back](#) options:

- Mail-in envelopes you can pick up and take with you
- Secure bins where you can drop your unwanted drugs onsite

Other pharmacies and clinics also offer year-round disposal options. The following are methods for locating medicine kiosks or drop-off boxes.

- Google maps [link](#) or search for "drug disposal near me" on google or google maps
- DEA Diversion Control Division
 - [Drop-Off Locations](#)
 - Call Center at 1-800-882-9539

Ultimately, Sailors who take part in Drug Take Back Day contribute to a safer, healthier, and more resilient Navy—protecting themselves, their shipmates, and their loved ones.

You Tube

Messages to Share:

- March 4: OSD resumed reporting positive test results for codeine. Access the link [here](#).
- April: Alcohol Awareness Month. Is advised annually to increase awareness about alcohol use and misuse. Learn more [here](#).
- April: Physical Wellness Month. Is advised to increase awareness about physical fitness and nutrition. Learn more [here](#).
- April 26: National Drug Take Back Day occurs annually to share helpful information on prescription medication disposal resources. Learn more [here](#).

SPOTLIGHT: Webinar/Training/ Prevention Power-Up

Webinar: ADMITS V4 DEMO
Date: [April 3](#)

Webinar: IFTDTL UPC User Reports
Date: [April 10](#)

Webinar: End Of Year Testing (6-month reporting)
Date: [April 17](#)

Webinar: Prevention Toolkit and Summer Safety
Date: [April 24](#)

Training: CMTs
Link: [Click Here](#)

Training: ADAMS & UPC Course
Link: [Navy e-Learning](#)

Training: DAPA Courses
Link: [CANTRAC](#)



OPNAV N173 | Navy Substance Prevention & Deterrence Branch

MONTH IN REVIEW

April 2025

DEFY: Information to Know

The Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) program not only educates and provides our youth with the tools to combat drugs, alcohol, and other negative behaviors; DEFY equips our youth with the tools to lead healthy drug-free lifestyles by equipping youth with the knowledge to identify protective factors to reduce risks of gang involvement, bullying, crime, and other destructive behaviors. Currently, there are about 1.6 million military children, who endure several challenges and unique experiences due to their parents' service, which can often reflect experiencing several home relocations every two to three years and possibly both parents being on deployment. To balance the emotions of displacement and other challenges, providing volunteer opportunities can be one way to encourage community support.

The Month of the Military Child is an annual observation aligned with the mission of the DEFY program by utilizing positive mentorship and community outreach to empower youth. In the month of April, the [DoD](#) highlights this awareness initiative and has resources on their website offering supportive services to military youth and parents. These resources include free membership for families to sign their children up for [the Boys & Girls Club of America](#); this is offered to children of active duty, National Guard, and reserve parents. Another resource for youth is the [4-H Military Partnership](#), which was developed to provide research-based programs for youth to experience comprehensive learning opportunities to unite youth, families, and communities. Additionally, there is a collaborative opportunity through [Sesame Street](#) for military families to receive fundamental ideas to assist them with fostering deeper connections to strengthen the family's dynamic.

Here is the [link](#) to learn more on The Month of the Military Child observation. To learn more on the DEFY program you can contact us via phone at (901)-874-3300 or check out the website [here](#).



The photo above is an image from the Navy Substance Prevention and Deterrence Branch's DEFY program. The image is a depiction of DEFY youth engaging in community with DEFY volunteers. Learn more [here](#).



Navy Substance Prevention & Deterrence Branch

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The OPNAV N173 Navy Substance Prevention & Deterrence office was established in 1982. The foundation of our office is sustained by our pursuit to support Fleet readiness by combating illegal and illicit substance and alcohol misuse. Our mission is to provide comprehensive education, resources, trainings, and enact policy updates to ensure Sailors receive proper awareness to form career-forwarding decisions. Within the our office, whole health matters and this is reflected with our Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) program, the Primary Prevention team, the Alcohol and Drug Management Information and Tracking System (ADMITS), Internet Forensic Toxicology Drug Testing Laboratory Portal (iFTDTL), the Web Drug Testing Program (WebDTP) and other programs that increase prevention efforts.

For more information, contact our office by using the phone and email information on this page or use the QRcode to view our webpage.



**LEARN
MORE!**

