



Highlight of the Month

UV Safety Awareness month. As summer begins to elevate in intensity and UV exposure increases – it is important to note that alcohol intake can significantly elevate skin cancer risks. A study conducted by [the European Perspective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition \(EPIC\) cohort](#) identified that an increase in alcohol consumption was associated with increased rates of melanoma, basal cell carcinoma, and squamous cell carcinoma. This information proves to be concerning all Service members who spend extended periods of time under intense sunlight.

Why? Alcohol affects your body in ways that can make your skin more vulnerable to skin damage. When you drink, your body breaks alcohol down into a substance called acetaldehyde, which causes harm to your skin cells and makes it more difficult for your skin to begin the repair process after sun exposure. Alcohol also reduces antioxidants in your body – natural protectors that aids in blocking damage from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays.

Your behavior and actions also play a critical role in sun safety. Drinking can cause individuals to be less careful about sunscreen use, wearing protective clothing, or ensuring that they limit their sun exposure time. Additionally, some common medications – like certain antibiotics, diuretics, or allergy medicines – can cause your skin to be easily penetrated by the sun causing you to burn faster.

Prevention Tips:

- Limit alcohol when spending time in the sun, especially on the water.
- Wear sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) and reapply often.
- Cover up with hats, sunglasses, and long sleeves.
- Check your medications for sun-sensitivity warnings.

Utilize these steps to keep your skin healthy and lower your risk of skin cancer.

Primary Prevention

Celebrate Freedom Responsibly: The Fourth of July is a time to honor America's independence and enjoy well-deserved time with family, friends, and fellow Sailors. While we celebrate with cookouts, fireworks, and summer fun, it's important to acknowledge a serious risk that spikes during this season: impaired driving.

Between 2019 and 2023, 2,653 people lost their lives in motor vehicle crashes over the July 4th holiday period. Alarming, 40% of drivers involved in those fatal crashes were drunk ([NHTSA, 2024](#)).

As Navy leaders and Sailors, it's our duty to lead by example and protect one another—both on and off duty.

THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK AND DRIVE

"Think driving yourself home is cheaper? Think again" ([NHTSA – Drug-Impaired Driving](#)).

- **Average rideshare cost:** ~\$25
- **Average DUI cost:** \$10,000+ in fines, legal fees, and lost time
- **You have too much to lose:** Protect your career, benefits, rank, and family
→ Learn more: [Own Your Limits Campaign](#)

Plan ahead: Designate a driver, use base transportation, or call a shipmate.

HOSTING YOUR OWN EVENT?

Consider celebrating in a **controlled environment** by hosting your own gathering. It's a safer alternative to bars and clubs and gives you the opportunity to model responsible behavior.

- Provide food, water, non-alcoholic drinks, and a place for guests to rest
- Offer rideshare options or allow guests to stay overnight
- **Avoid alcohol when handling fireworks** — impaired coordination increases the risk of accidents

Follow all safety protocols and keep fireworks away from children, pets, and flammable objects (CBP Firework Safety).

Bottom Line:

Never drive under the influence. One responsible decision can save a life — maybe even your own. Let's keep our Navy strong, ready, and resilient.

You Tube

Messages to Share:

- July 6-12: [National Therapeutic Recreation Week!](#) To provide information and intervention-based resources that assist Sailors with recovering from mental and physical injuries.
- July 22: [World Brain Day!](#) This annual occurrence is recognized to increase awareness about brain health, neurological disorders, and prevention practices.

SPOTLIGHT: Webinar/Training/ Prevention Power-Up

Webinar: No Webinar

Date: [JUL 03](#)

Webinar: NDSL Brief

Date: [JUL 10](#)

Webinar: Vaping

Date: [JUL 17](#)

Webinar: ADMITS Brief (various reports)

Date: [JUL 24](#)

Webinar: WebDTP Pools & Units

Date: [JUL 31](#)

Training: CMTs

Link: [Click Here](#)

Training: ADAMS & UPC Course

Link: [Navy e-Learning](#)

Training: DAPA Courses

Link: [CANTRAC](#)

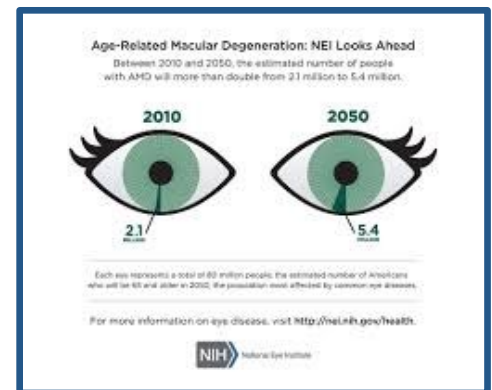


Healthy Vision Month

Healthy vision is more than eyesight, it's about protecting the physical and functional health of your eyes so you can stay sharp, focused, and ready. As a sailor, that kind of readiness matters. Whether you're standing watch, repairing equipment, or navigating complex environments, your vision is an essential asset.

Unfortunately, substance misuse can cloud that vision. Excessive drinking doesn't just blur judgment; it starves the optic nerve. By stripping the body of B-vitamins, alcohol causes a bilateral loss of central vision and color that can progress to blindness. With the addition of chronic tobacco use, [toxic-nutritional optic neuropathy](#) can be triggered. This can be a painless condition, so sailors will often not be aware that it is happening until they notice blurred central vision and trouble distinguishing reds from greens. [Tobacco](#) has been linked to other serious eye conditions such as macular degeneration and cataracts. Cigarette [smokers](#) are 2-3x more likely to develop cataracts and 2-4x more likely to develop macular degeneration. Abstaining from alcohol and using vitamin therapy can stop this degeneration of the eyes because once the fibers are gone, the blur is permanent.

It's important to spread awareness, a study that was conducted to assess the [relationship](#) between smoking and blindness showed that 9.5% of American smokers are aware of the risk smoking has on vision. Unlike tobacco, there is no national figure for drinkers' awareness of alcohol-related sight loss. Researchers call this an "evidence vacuum" which amplifies the importance of increasing awareness that the substances can have on ocular health.



The photo above is an image of Age-Related Macular Degeneration.

Navy Substance Prevention & Deterrence Branch

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Phone: 901-874-4900

Fax: 901-874-4228

Email: MILL_N17_DDD@navy.mil

Case Resolution Team (Medical Review Process)

Phone: 901-874-4868

Email: MILL_N17_DDR@navy.mil

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 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!**