



Highlight of the Month

Cold Weather Safety As the temperatures drop, it is important to exercise caution when consuming alcohol. While many people believe that drinking alcohol helps warm the body, it actually has the opposite effect. Alcohol causes blood vessels to dilate, leading to increased blood flow to the skin. This can create a sensation of warmth, but it results in the body losing heat more quickly. In cold weather, this heat loss can be dangerous because it reduces the body's core temperature without the person realizing it.

Additionally, alcohol impairs judgment, which can lead to poor decision-making in cold environments. Someone under the influence might not recognize the warning signs of hypothermia or might misjudge their ability to stay outside in freezing temperatures for extended periods. Alcohol also affects the body's ability to shiver, a natural mechanism that helps maintain body heat in cold conditions. Without the ability to shiver, the body becomes even more vulnerable to the cold.

Cold weather poses risks like frostbite and hypothermia, conditions that can quickly become life-threatening. Hypothermia occurs when the body's core temperature drops dangerously low, impairing the function of vital organs. Alcohol increases the [risk](#) of hypothermia because it lowers the body's internal temperature faster while masking the symptoms, which can further delay seeking necessary help.

Lastly, alcohol also increases the likelihood of accidental injuries. Slippery conditions, such as ice or snow, require good motor skills and reflexes to navigate safely. Alcohol impairs these abilities, increasing the risk of slips, falls, or accidents, which can lead to severe injuries.

For these reasons, it is crucial to use alcohol cautiously in cold weather. Stay hydrated with water or warm liquids if you are planning to be outdoors in winter conditions. Watch for [hypothermia and frostbite](#) signs such as drowsiness, confusion, and numb, pale, or waxy skin. If you notice these symptoms, seek warmth immediately. Stay safe and enjoy the change of seasons!

Primary Prevention

Tobacco Cigarette and second-hand smoke exposure cause over 480,000 deaths every year, which is approximately one in five [deaths](#). Sailors use tobacco products more than [civilians](#).

Tobacco use is a major issue that impacts health and readiness. While most Sailors do not use tobacco products, almost 40% of those who do began to while on active [duty](#). Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) like e-cigarettes and e-hookahs are aggressively and glamorously marketed; however, using them is neither safer than cigarettes or a proven cessation [technique](#). Some believe that using smokeless tobacco such as chew, snuff, dip, or snus is a safer and quicker approach to quit smoking, but it is not a safer alternative. Smokeless tobacco contains more nicotine than cigarettes, making it more [addictive](#).

Leaders play a crucial role in helping Sailors quit using tobacco products by creating climates that support abstaining from tobacco use, motivating Sailors to quit using tobacco products, ensuring that command tobacco policies are enforced and adhered to, and sharing the harms of second hand smoke exposure with [Sailors](#).

Regardless of an individual's age, how long or how much they smoked, quitting tobacco is one of the most important steps for improving wellness and reducing the risk of early death and onset of smoke-related health conditions including heart disease, cancer, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD](#). Using dip, snus, or vaping products also poses significant health risks, including nicotine addiction, oral health issues, and lung damage, further emphasizing the importance of quitting all forms of tobacco and nicotine use. Quitting all forms of tobacco also has the added benefits of saving money and protecting your loved ones, peers, and pets from the effects of second-hand smoke and the chemical residue left behind by vaping.

Whatever your reason for quitting, you can start by building a quit plan, knowing what challenges to expect, planning your quit date, and consulting with your local medical treatment facility (MTF) for medications to help with cravings and [withdrawals](#). Visit the [You Can Quit 2](#) campaign for more information and resources on tobacco free living and check out the [Prevention Toolkit](#) on MyNavy HR for additional prevention-based resources.

You Tube

Messages to Share:

- March 4: OSD resumed reporting positive test results for codeine. Access the link [here](#).
- Native American Heritage Month: [Observed](#) to increase awareness of the "culture, traditions, and achievements of the nation's original inhabitants and of their descendants."
- November 6: [National Stress Awareness Day](#). Recognizing the effects of stress and building coping mechanisms.
- November 11: [Veterans Day](#). Honoring those who have served in the U.S Armed Forces.

SPOTLIGHT: Webinar/Training/ Prevention Power-Up

Webinar: Holiday Safety and Prevention
Date: [November 7](#)

Webinar: Tobacco Cessation
Date: [November 14](#)

Webinar: ADCOs Role and Responsibilities
Date: [November 21](#)

Webinar: No Webinar
Date: [November 28](#)

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

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

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



Strategic Communications: Information To Know

National Stress Awareness Day Recognized on November 6th focuses on highlighting the influences of stress and how it impacts mental and physical wellness. The awareness day was enacted by the [International Stress Management Association \(ISMA\)](#) to highlight stress factors in the workplace and reduce negative connotations. It is crucial to determine what stressors are impacting our health. Some factors could be the cause of health-related issues, while others could be the result of external factors such as stressful work environments, different forms of abuse, financial stress, or family-related complications.

During the holiday season, it is important to identify any potential internal and external factors that can induce the level of stress you or someone you know is experiencing. Stressors can cause individuals to seek unhealthy coping mechanisms to “get through the day,” such as consuming an increased amount of [alcohol](#) that is outside of their normal intake or [smoking](#) excessively. Excessive alcohol consumption and the use of tobacco, including nicotine products such as vaping and dip, are the leading causes of mortality rates in the U.S. During celebratory seasons, alcohol consumption frequency increases to the levels of heavy drinking or binge drinking. If you choose to consume alcohol, knowing your [limits](#) is essential as alcohol can impair judgement, delay your reaction time, cause you to experience blurred vision, and other issues.

Stress Awareness Day and International Stress Awareness Week is advised on November 4th through 8th, to shine light on stress and provide stress reduction techniques. One of the key ways to reduce stress is to identify your preferred self-care methods, such as quiet time, practicing mindfulness, meditating, going for a walk, or practicing 5 minutes of breathing. Balancing your stressors could also look like increasing your knowledge about stress factors and stress management techniques. To reduce workplace stress during the holiday season, consider collaborating with your team to develop a series of stress-reduction workshops to increase team building and understanding of balancing workloads.

It is important to manage your stress levels as seasons change, some helpful tips include tending to your emotions, creating a plan for when you experience a stress trigger such as going for a walk, talking with a family member or friend, or joining a new hobby. Remember, you are not alone; the holiday season can cause various emotions to arise. If you or someone you know have experienced symptoms of stress you can seek assistance [here](#).



The photo above is an image from the Navy Medicine site. The page discusses the effects of stress and how to navigate stress as Navy personnel. Learn more [here](#).

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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.



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