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ADDRESSING COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS IN AUD

Understanding alcohol use disorder (AUD) is often complicated by stigma and common misunderstandings. Watch for these misconceptions in your conversations about AUD with patients and peers.

Are you seeing the full medical impact of AUD?



YOU MAY HAVE HEARD:

Alcohol use is primarily a health concern at heavy consumption levels

BUT THE DATA SHOW[1]:

Even at low levels of consumption, alcohol has been causally linked to **>200 HEALTH CONDITIONS**

INCLUDING:

- Hypertension and arrhythmias
- Certain types of cancer

YOU MAY HAVE ALSO HEARD:

Most deaths associated with alcohol use are due to chronic liver diseases

HOWEVER[2]:

CDC data show that **alcohol-attributable cardiovascular disease and cancer together claim**

54,389 LIVES ANNUALLY

compared to

43,636 DEATHS

from alcohol-related liver disease.

=10K

AUD affects nearly every organ system you assess daily— not just the liver.[3,4]

Do you recognize common risk factors for AUD?



SOME MAY ASSUME THAT:

Genetic factors contribute minimally to a patient's risk for AUD.

BUT THE TRUTH IS:

Studies have shown that **50%-60%** OF THE RISK OF DEVELOPING AUD IS GENETIC.[5]

This **RISK IS FURTHER AMPLIFIED** depending on the family history of AUD.[6]*

One parent with AUD	Both parents with AUD
2.5x	4.4x

*Compared to children of parents without AUD.

SOME MIGHT THINK:

A patient's problematic alcohol use is always a coping mechanism or a "secondary diagnosis" of their co-occurring mental health disorder(s)

BUT THE FACTS SHOW THAT:

MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS *and* **UNHEALTHY ALCOHOL USE**

commonly **co-occur,** can **reinforce each other,** and **either can predispose a patient to the other.**[7]



AUD has strong genetic roots and a complex, bidirectional relationship with mental health— ***not a simple story of personal choice or secondary symptoms.***[5,8]

How many patients in your practice could have AUD?



MANY BELIEVE:

The prevalence of undiagnosed AUD is so low that routine screening for alcohol use in adults is unnecessary

BUT IN TRUTH[9]:

A national sample of patients at risk for AUD revealed

~90% OF THOSE WITH ELEVATED RISK

and

~60% OF THOSE WITH SEVERE RISK

WERE UNDIAGNOSED.

AUD is often pictured in its most severe form. However, ***AUD is a spectrum disorder, and the way it's talked about can impact whether patients remain hidden or seek help.***[9-11]







Learning the facts of AUD ***helps clinicians ask the right questions for more productive and supportive conversations about AUD with patients and peers.***

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