



Season's Greetings

HOLIDAY DRINKING & DRIVING

Christmas – the most wonderful time of the year. It's a season for family gatherings, festivity, and fun, a time to see the beauty in everything and everyone; filled with anticipation and expectation for a new year. Unfortunately, Christmas is also a season of tragedy and loss due to the impact of drinking and driving.



FAST FACTS on the impact of drinking and driving:

- Each day, 37 people die from drunk driving. That's one death every 39 minutes.
- In SC, in 2022, there were 474 drunk driving deaths.
- 25% of traffic deaths of children aged 0-14 involved an alcohol-impaired driver.
- Drunk drivers cause 76% of fatal crashes in the U.S.
- In 2022, more than 16,000 South Carolinians were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.
- Drugs, including alcohol, are involved in about 56% of automobile driver deaths nationally.

WHAT YOU CAN DO to make a difference:



- Before any drinking, designate a non-drinking person within your group.
- Don't let friends drive impaired. Despite what they might say or do, take their keys away.
- If you've been drinking, get a ride home with a friend or call a taxi.
- If you're hosting a party where alcohol is served, remind your guests to plan ahead and designate a sober driver. Offer non-alcoholic beverages and ensure each guest leaves with a sober driver.
- If you observe a drunk driver on the road, call the highway patrol and report the incident, noting the location and direction of the vehicle.
- Remember the holidays are about celebrating life, not death!



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PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Opioid misuse and overdoses continue to be at epidemic levels in the United States. Data indicates that opioid overdoses increased in South Carolina during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was likely due to increased anxiety, social isolation, and depression. In 2021, Just Plain Killers data reported 1,733 opioid-related deaths, where 126 involved heroin and 1,494 involved fentanyl. Additionally, data from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health revealed:

- 9.3 million adults misused prescription painkillers
- 6.2 million adults misused a prescription tranquilizer or sedative
- 3.3 million adults misused a prescription stimulant

WHAT WE KNOW

The holidays bring families, especially teenagers and young adults, to your household. We know that 3 million people over the age of 12 reported using cough and cold medications to get high. Most cases of dextromethorphan abuse called into poison control centers involved 15- and 16-year-olds. Because of the opioid epidemic in South Carolina, it is crucial to manage, store, and dispose of all prescribed and over-the-counter medications properly, especially during the holidays.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- First, check your medicine cabinet for expired prescriptions and medications no longer needed. Medications should be properly stored out of reach of pets, children, and vulnerable adults.
- Secondly, properly dispose of expired, unwanted, or unused medicines through a Drug Take Back program or a local permanent drug drop box.
- Thirdly, **REMEMBER** to take medications as directed! The holidays are busy and may cause one to skip taking prescribed medicine or forget to leave their medications at home. Take care of yourself!



**WISHING YOU A SAFE &
JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON!**



Hold Out the Lifeline: A Mission To Families

Each One Can Reach One

803-401-5307

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