

# Alcohol Use Disorder

While alcohol use has been trending upwards for years, it has become even more prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic as there were more deaths caused by alcohol use than the virus in people under 65. The 2020 National Survey on Drug Use & Health found that in the last 3 months of 2020, 25.9 million people said that they were using alcohol “a little more or much more” than prior to the pandemic.



## What is AUD?

Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) is defined by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use despite adverse social, occupational, or health consequences. It is estimated that 1 in 8 American adults meet the criteria for AUD. The impact of AUD on Missourians is significant. Alcohol-related disorders are a leading cause of hospital visits and re-admissions. Among MO HealthNet participants, this equated to approximately 8,200 alcohol-related emergency department (ED) visits and/or hospitalizations in the past year. Each year, alcohol contributes to the death of nearly 1,900 Missourians.

MO HealthNet strives to raise awareness of the services and treatment options covered for participants with AUD. In 2019, among MO HealthNet participants newly diagnosed with AUD, only 38% initiated treatment for it, while only 7% were still engaged in AUD treatment after one month. Research shows that medications combined with counseling can be an effective treatment for AUD. However, of the approximately 23,865 MO HealthNet participants with an alcohol-related diagnosis in the past year, only 6% received any medication.

## Covered Treatment Options

MO HealthNet covers a variety of treatment options for participants with AUD, depending on their needs:

- **Detox and Withdrawal**
  - Detoxification services
  - Alcohol rehabilitation
- **Psychological Counseling**
  - Individual, group, or family counseling is covered when performed by a licensed behavioral health professional
  - Specialized services for AUD are also available through CSTAR providers
- **Medication**
  - MO HealthNet has several medications available for participants with AUD without a prior authorization. These medications cover a range of options depending on the patient's point of recovery:
    - Chlordiapoide (Librium) for Alcohol withdrawal
    - Disulfiram (Antabuse), Naltrexone (Vivitrol), or Acamprosate (Campral) for AUD

## Questions?

For more information, visit the MO HealthNet provider page: [dss.mo.gov/mhd/providers](https://dss.mo.gov/mhd/providers).