



Embrace Health and Wellness by Celebrating Dry January

In American culture, we view the start of the New Year as a time to make life changes, to reflect on the past year, to celebrate a new season in life, and a time to make changes to our behaviors, habits, and attitudes. A Dry January month of sobriety is an annual tradition for many people, an opportunity to improve your overall health and wellness.

The concept of a sobriety month at the start of the year was established in 2013 by the United Kingdom charity Alcohol Concern, which is now known as Alcohol Change UK. Dry January is the organization's flagship campaign which has been changing the conversation about alcohol. The trend caught on around the globe, and now many people choose to take part in Dry January as a way to simply drink less or reset after a month or two of holiday partying.

For some it's a New Year's resolution to drink less, while others claim it's a way to "detox" from excessive drinking over the holidays. All believe that it's going to be beneficial for their health and wellness. There are several studies that suggest the alcohol-free challenge reduces consumption of alcohol and improves health and wellness for months afterward.

Alcohol is part of many of our lives and all of us will have noticed its effects – if not the effects of our own drinking, then someone else's at one time or the other. What's true about us as individuals is equally true of our communities. We don't have to believe that our community has extraordinary alcohol problems to think it would be worth us all taking time to evaluate our drinking.

Alcohol and substance use and disorders affect the wellness, which is the overall well-being, of individuals. Wellness incorporates the mental, emotional, physical, occupational, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of a person's life. Each aspect of wellness can affect overall quality of life, so it is important to consider all aspects of health. This is especially important for people with mental health and substance use conditions because wellness directly relates to life quality and longevity.

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, moderate alcohol consumption is 1 drink per day for women and up to 2 drinks per day for men. Binge drinking is defined as a pattern of drinking alcohol that brings alcohol concentration (BAC) to 0.08 percent. This pattern corresponds to consuming 5 or more drinks (male), or 4 or more drinks (female) in about 2 hours.

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SVT Health & Wellness provides comprehensive medical and dental care to all patients in the communities of Seldovia, Homer and Anchor Point. Discounts are available to all patients who qualify, based on income and family size.

