4 Things You Should Know About Alcohol

When making a choice about whether to drink, consider its impact on your body and safety:

1. **Alcohol increases your blood pressure and heart rate—but slows brain activity.** This can negatively affect a person’s:
   - Ability to think clearly and remember
   - Behavior (like sleeping and eating habits)
   - Coordination (potentially causing unsteady walking and falls)
   - Mood (irritability and sadness)

2. **Our bodies react differently to alcohol as we age.** You may feel more effects from a drink now than before. And drinking too much alcohol over a long period of time could lead to:
   - Liver damage
   - Some kinds of cancer
   - Immune system disorders
   - Brain damage

3. **Drinking alcohol can up the risk for hypothermia.** Even when it’s above 40 degrees outside, your body temperature can go too low if you get wet and become chilled from rain or sweat.

4. **Some health conditions and many medications make it unsafe to drink alcohol.** This includes certain drugs used to treat arthritis, diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure, as well as allergies, colds and heartburn. Talk with your healthcare provider about what is appropriate for you.

Sources include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

For more health and wellness tips, visit sutteremployer.org.