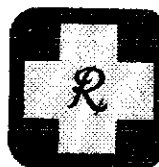




Australian Divisions of General Practice



The
PHARMACY
GUILD of
AUSTRALIA

GP and Pharmacy groups working together to fight binge drinking

The Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP) and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia are pleased to announce a joint initiative to combat the problems associated with binge drinking.

The two organisations have produced a series of Community Service Announcements, one of which aims to raise awareness of the potential pitfalls of popular “alco-pops” – premixed, ready-to-drink, spirit-based alcoholic beverages that are typically sweet, colourful and deceptively strong in terms of alcoholic content.

“Since their introduction to the Australian market in 1995, alco-pops have seen a big increase of market share, particularly with underage drinkers (12 to 17 years) and with females,” Dr Rob Walters, GP from Tasmania and Past-President of ADGP, said.

“The alcohol content of different alco-pops varies greatly, with many drinks containing more alcohol than full strength beer. It is important that you realise how much alcohol you are drinking and to always drink in moderation.”

Alcohol is tolerated as an acceptable drug, but it is responsible for most drug-related deaths in teenagers. Figures from a recent ADGP study show around 72 per cent of Australian teenagers have tried alcohol at least once. Alcohol is also associated with a variety of serious health risks, including binge drinking, unsafe sex practices, violence and drink-driving. More than 10 per cent of Australian teenagers binge drink every week, while 35 per cent admit to having intentionally become drunk.

“It is difficult to prevent teenagers from experimenting with alcohol, but by talking to their children parents can encourage sensible drinking habits. Your GP or pharmacist can provide you with information on the effects of alcohol on teenagers, and can refer you to other organisations which help teenagers with drinking problems,” Dr Walters said.

The Australian Alcohol Guidelines suggest that men should drink no more than four standard drinks on average and no more than six on any one day; and women should drink no more than two on average and four on any one day.

The Community Service Announcement on alco-pops began airing on Tuesday 23 May 2006.

A message from GPs and Community Pharmacists – working together for a healthy Australia.

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