



Restore and Refresh with Dry January

By Mari Kriescher, Director, [Oneida Behavioral Health](#)

The time surrounding the Christmas and New Year holidays can be filled with stressful schedules, family obligations, and multiple opportunities for overindulgence of food and drink. Alcohol can play a significant role in many cultural and family celebrations. While alcohol can initially help you feel more relaxed during social situations, short-term, it can interfere with communication pathways in the brain, and impact your memory, speech, balance and judgement. Over time, prolonged alcohol use can weaken your immune system, and contribute to health risks such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease and digestive problems.

This year, [Oneida Behavioral Health](#) encourages you to take steps to restore and refresh your body and mind following the holidays by participating in *Dry January*. *Dry January*, as its name suggests, involves removing alcohol from the menu throughout the month. Celebrated under different names in different countries over the past many decades, *Dry January* is a wonderful way to help your body recover from the effects of overindulging throughout the holiday season.

Tips for a successful Dry January

[Oneida Behavioral Health](#) encourages you to give it a try. To help make your *Dry January* a success, find enjoyable alternatives to use during social encounters during the month. Toss frozen berries into a glass of sparkling water, or make yourself a virgin bloody Mary, savoring the spice and garnish without the alcohol.

If your schedule allows, add downtime to your *Dry January*. Some great downtime ideas to restore and refresh include: periodic deep breathing exercises; taking a walk outdoors; trying a yoga, qi gong, tai chi or other gentle stretching and movement session; meditation or prayer; or making the time to visit with a loved one or friend.

If you were consuming quite a bit of alcohol, it may take a week or so for your body to readjust. A few of the possible side effects of alcohol withdrawal include sweating, tremors, sleep interruptions, anxiety, restlessness and rapid heartbeat. If you are experiencing significant alcohol withdrawal, please seek medical attention.

If you find that removing alcohol from the menu in January is too difficult to tackle alone, [Oneida Behavioral Health](#) has resources to help. Give us a call at (920) 490-3790 and let us know that you could use resources to help you have a *Dry January*.