

CONNECTING AMERICA to RETHINK ALCOHOL



An innovative approach to
IMPROVE PERSONAL HEALTH
Reflecting on our
relationship with alcohol

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Dry January is a British one-month alcohol-free challenge. It was developed by Alcohol Change UK, a British charity, that encourages people to "ditch the hangover, reduce the waistline and save some serious money by giving up alcohol for 31 days." THIS PROGRAM HAS EVIDENCE-BASED SUCCESS AND OFFERS LONG-TERM BENEFITS WITH IMPROVEMENTS IN EMPLOYEE HEALTH.

Meharry Medical College IS NOW the official US Dry January licensee, and has officially launched the United States based program, **DRY JANUARY USA**. Due to the foundational roots in the UK, many of the features and elements are culture-defining. The team at Meharry Medical College is now working to fine-tune the campaign for the American market by surveying identified consumer personas. Meharry Medical College's goal is to draw on the success of the UK program, apply an American cultural narrative to raise awareness of the program, and encourage them to visit the **DRY JANUARY USA** website and download and use the Try Dry app. **EMPLOYEE HEALTH PROGRAMS SHOULD CONSIDER ADOPTING DRY JANUARY USA AS PART OF THEIR ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS.**

01. INTRODUCTION

DRY JANUARY is an international public health campaign.

DRY JANUARY USA was launched by Meharry Medical College for its American debut in January 2023.

02. METHODS

We are using current deidentified US data from the UK TRY DRY app and comparing it to the new **DRY JANUARY USA** campaign.

03. COMPARISON

Will be made between total numbers, ages, use and amount of interaction, and reduction in drinking and change to alternative non-alcoholic beverages.

4. RESULTS

We anticipated and noted a dramatic increase in the number of **DRY JANUARY USA** participants, demonstrating and quantifying the US market penetration. Data gathered has highlighted app engagement insights, defined strategies and features that are most effective in reducing and quitting alcohol in the short term, and identified user personas that are most likely to reduce their long-term alcohol use. **THERE WAS A 60% INCREASE IN TRY DRY APP ENGAGEMENT SINCE MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE LAUNCHED DRY JANUARY USA.**

5. CONCLUSION

DRY JANUARY USA is a new public health tool to individuals and organizations in the United States thinking about alcohol. It offers inspiration, education, and guidance to assess and manage relationships with alcohol and expands awareness of non-alcoholic beverages (including non-alcohol beers, wines, and spirits). We look forward to broad participation and collaboration to amplify this transformative public health tool to American employers, employees, and organizations to encourage them to examine their relationship with alcohol.

THE ALCOHOL PROBLEM IN THE US

- About 88,000 people die of alcohol-related causes annually.
- It is the third-leading cause of preventable death.
- More than 6% of adults have an alcohol use disorder, about 1 in 12 men and 1 in 25 women.
- Approximately 623,000 individuals between the ages of 12 and 17 have alcohol use disorders.
- Every year, 1 in 5 adults — an estimated 53 million people — experience harm because of someone else's drinking.

DRY JANUARY USA helps Americans examine their personal relationship with alcohol and how it may affect their bodies, minds, sleep, wallets, and community.

- <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/alcohol-use-facts-resources-fact-sheet.pdf>
- <https://www.phi.org/our-work/issues/alcohol/>
- <https://arg.org/news/alcohol-causes-significant-harm-to-those-other-than-the-drinker/>

PANDEMIC ALCOHOL-RELATED TRENDS

- Since the COVID pandemic, alcohol use and related harms have increased dramatically, including alcohol-related car injuries and deaths.
- More than a dozen studies have found that 20% to 40% of individuals surveyed reported consuming more alcohol than usual during the pandemic, noted George Koob, Ph.D., Director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).
 - <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2781739>
 - <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2781738>
- Preventable deaths from alcohol use increased 25% in 2020
 - <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2790491>

BENEFITS OF REDUCING ALCOHOL

- By reducing or abstaining from alcohol, your body will immediately begin to reverse the adverse effects.
- Research demonstrates that damage caused to your brain, liver, cardiovascular system, gut, and skin will heal as you reduce or eliminate drinking.
- Better-looking skin, improved sleep, healthier weight, better mental health, improved immunity, lower risk of cancer, reduced cardiovascular risk, and better memory and thinking.



DRY JANUARY USA is a program licensed and operated by Meharry Medical College in the United States. www.meharryresearch.org/dry-january-usa/



Meharry Medical College, an HBCU founded in 1876, is the nation's largest private, independent historically Black academic health sciences center dedicated to educating minority and other health professionals. The College is particularly well known for its uniquely nurturing, highly effective educational programs; emerging preeminence in health disparities research; culturally sensitive, evidence-based health services and significant contribution to the diversity of the nation's health professions workforce. Visit <https://home.mmc.edu/> to learn more.



Alcohol Change UK, <https://alcoholchange.org.uk/>, works for a society free from the harm caused by alcohol without being anti-alcohol. It creates evidence-driven change by working towards five key changes: improved knowledge, better policies and regulation, shifted cultural norms, improved drinking behaviors, and more and better support and treatment. Dry January is a trademarked program of Alcohol Change UK.



Dry January
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