



December 31, 2014



DAILY SITUATIONAL
AWARENESS BRIEF



Marion County
Medical Multi-Agency
Coordination Center

NATIONAL TERRORISM ADVISORY SYSTEM

No active alerts



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THREAT ANALYSIS

Alcohol-related injuries likely to fill EDs on New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is one of the peak nights for alcohol-related emergency department (ED) visits and hospitals should take steps to prepare for the extra patients, especially given capacity challenges related to the influenza season.

New Year's Eve is commonly celebrated with alcoholic beverages, which greatly increases a person's risk of visiting an ED. In a recent article in the journal *Addiction*, researchers who surveyed thousands of ED patients in 18 countries found that a person who had consumed a single drink was about twice as likely to end up in an ED as a person who had not been drinking. Consuming three drinks in a six-hour period rendered a person 4.6 times more likely to end up in the ED. Having 10 drinks increased a person's odds by a factor of 10. The most frequent cause of ED visits was interpersonal violence, but traffic accidents and falls were also common. (Sources: [Medscape](#), [Addiction](#), [Washington Post](#))

Some EDs have reported census increases exceeding 50 percent on New Year's Eve, and alcohol poisoning is another common diagnosis. An influx of intoxicated patients can stretch ED resources because providers often have to wait hours for patients' blood alcohol levels to return to normal before releasing them. While these patients may not need acute care, they are often in a semi-conscious state and need to be monitored. The president of the United Kingdom's College of Emergency Medicine recently advocated for police to arrest intoxicated individuals who clog up EDs, monopolizing resources and sometimes abusing providers. (Sources: [University of California San Francisco](#), [WBEZ Chicago](#), [News Guardian](#), [The Guardian](#))

ACTION STEPS

1

Review evening and night shift staffing plans and prepare to see and treat a higher-than-average number of patients with injuries from motor vehicle crashes, falls, fighting and alcohol poisoning. (Sources: [EMS World](#), [Medscape](#))

2

Consider creating a designated space in the ED to house patients who just need to sober up, as San Francisco General Hospital does. (Source: [San Francisco Chronicle](#))

3

Take Medscape's [quick quiz](#) to refresh your knowledge of the signs and best treatments for alcohol poisoning.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY

31

Pacers vs. Heat
Bankers Life Fieldhouse

New Years Eve at the IMA
Indianapolis Museum of Art

Countdown to Noon
The Children's Museum

Family New Years Eve
Indiana State Museum

Indianapolis Auto Show 2015
Indiana Convention Center & Lucas Oil Stadium

New Year's Eve Masquerade Ball
Grand Hall & Conference Center at Historic Union Station

Here Come the Mummies
Old National Centre

New Year's Eve on Georgia St
Georgia Street

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