

# Alcohol (C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH)

## What does it all mean ?

By Sp4 Leslie D. Custer  
Alcohol Abuse Counselor

There are many reasons a soldier in the 22nd Signal Brigade may abuse alcohol. As a counselor at the McNair Counseling Center I am in constant interaction with service members and the abuse of alcohol. Using my experience as an alcohol abuse counselor, and information provided by my clients, I am writing this article to express some important issues on alcohol abuse.

### Reasons for alcohol abuse

The reasons heard most often in the abuse of alcohol are depression, homesickness, financial troubles, marriage, and the military. Military problems appear most often in my counseling. In the eyes of many soldiers involved in abusing alcohol, military life takes away their individuality. Soldiers may feel as if they are being treated as children rather than the adults they are. Responsibility is taken by use of authority, being told how to dress, keep their rooms, and to act gives rise to a feeling of uselessness and degradation.

### No recognition

Job satisfaction for them is hard to come by because when not actually in the field the soldier is given menial jobs to occupy his time which doesn't tax his mental capabilities or help him grow. When the military says the mission comes first, the individual feels used and gets little recognition. That's a problem! As these problems occur the chance of alcohol abuse increases.



Alcohol is used as a temporary relief from frustration and stress in reaction of some of these soldiers to the military. When abuse occurs, it tends to make military life appear difficult to handle (Article 15's, DWI, hassles, lateness and decrease in appearance and job performance), the result being a vicious cycle, each affecting the other. At this point the Community Counseling Center, (CCC), becomes involved.

A service member comes to CCC thru self referral or referral by the commander for alcohol behavior. We try to help in problem areas, although some things cannot be changed, they can be dealt with differently. Immediate results and encouragement are needed in the building of self esteem. Goals, long and short term, need to be established for a soldier to readjust. Through counseling, one can learn to handle situations differently and can once again be confident and effective as a soldier and an individual.

### To get help

Anyone who has further questions or would just like to talk, stop down at the CCC, located in Building 859, next to the gym at McNair and Building 4004, just inside the front gate on Cambrai-Fritsch. Give us a call, in Hoechst (2315-732) or Darmstadt (2371-6506). Or contact your commander or ADC. Remember we do care.

### For more information, write

The American Council on Alcohol Problems, 6955 University Ave. Des Moines Iowa 50311.

Alcoholics Anonymous, Box 459 Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163.

National Council on Alcoholism, 733 Third Ave. New York, N.Y. 10017.