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Alcoholism and Psychiatry Comorbidity - Rising Issues in India

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Alcohol consumption has been steadily increasing in developing countries like India and decreasing in developed countries since the 1980's. The pattern of drinking to intoxication in developing countries is more prevalent in developing countries indicating higher levels of risk due to drinking. Currently there are 62.5 million alcohol users estimated in Indian Continent. Per-capita consumption of alcohol increased by 106.7% over the period from 1960 to 2009. The Lancet report in 2009 indicates sales of alcohol growth rate of 8% in the past 3 years. 21-30% of men drink and 2-5% of women drink. But up to a fifth of this group about 14 million are dependent drinkers requiring help. There is a dual relationship between alcohol use and psychiatry illness. Alcohol use is associated with neuro-psychiatry conditions like delirium tremens and alcoholic hallucinosis, withdrawal symptoms ranging from mood change to personality changes. Persons with alcohol use have a higher psychiatric comorbidity than persons without alcohol use. Management of these people is extremely difficult as most of the patients have got an external locus of control and there is a relapse of symptoms over a period of time. Both drug intervention and behavioral modifications have to be initiated during the course of treatment.