

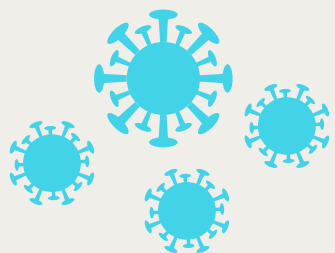


## ALCOHOL AND COVID-19

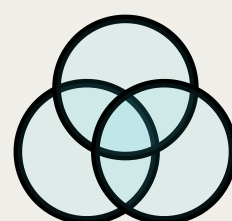
### WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW



Each year, alcohol consumption contributes to **3 million deaths globally, and 390,000 deaths in the Americas.**  
In the Americas, alcohol is responsible for **18.9 million Disability Adjusted Life Years**



Alcohol weakens the immune system, making consumers **more susceptible to getting COVID-19**



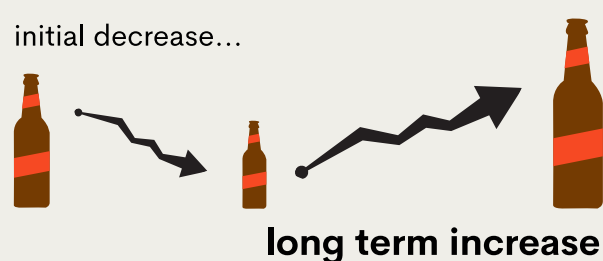
Alcohol risks and harms are **interconnected**  
Alcohol is a **risk factor** for COVID-19 and NCDs and NCDs **increase the risk of dying** from COVID-19

### ALCOHOL USE DURING THE PANDEMIC IN THE NON-LATIN CARIBBEAN

A PAHO survey revealed that among English speaking Caribbean survey respondents, between **2019** and June, **2020**

- 1 Prevalence of alcohol used **decreased** from **67%** → **56%**
- 2 Monthly consumption of informal or illicit alcohol **increased** from **2.2%** → **4.9%**
- 3 Heavy episodic drinking among youth ages 18-29 **increased** from **29.5%** → **36.2%**

In past public health and economic crises, alcohol consumption patterns have been seen to **decrease initially** due to restrictions on alcohol access, but **increase in the long-term** due to prolonged **uncertainty and distress**



### ALCOHOL, COVID-19 AND MENTAL HEALTH

**Alcohol is sometimes used to deal with difficult emotions**

**52.8%** of PAHO survey English speaking Caribbean respondents reported at least one feeling of **nervousness, anxiety, trouble sleeping and relaxing, irritability, restlessness, fear and uncertainty** during the pandemic

A UNICEF survey found that **46%** of female and **31%** of male Latin-American and Caribbean youth were **pessimistic about the future**



### THE ALCOHOL INDUSTRY

Alcohol is **heavily marketed** in the Caribbean and regional alcohol companies have **used the current pandemic to promote their brands** through corporate social responsibility

*'Regional distilleries join the fight against COVID-19'*

*'Distillery donates 55 laptops to secondary schools'*



**Such marketing may promote alcohol use in the long run**

**HEAVY ALCOHOL MARKETING COUPLED WITH THE COVID-19 CRISIS CAUSING POOR MENTAL HEALTH IS LIKELY TO LEAD TO AN INCREASE IN ALCOHOL USE AND MISUSE IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION**