

Resisting Pressure to Use

When you decide to abstain from alcohol or drug use, it can be a big change. People will probably still offer you alcohol or drugs. To help you reach your goal, it is important to know how to refuse alcohol or drugs. Refusing drugs may be easy or more difficult depending on whom you are with, where you are, the time of day etc. (basically any of the triggers). Being prepared by practicing use refusal skills can help you stay away from drugs and reach your goal. Below are the basic steps to use for refusing alcohol or drugs.

- ❖ **Say, “No, thanks”**
- ❖ **Use good body positioning**
- ❖ **Suggest an alternative**
- ❖ **Change the subject**
- ❖ **Confront the aggressor**

- **Say, “No, thanks.”** Of course, if someone offers you alcohol or drugs, saying “no, thanks” is the first thing you would want to do. To make sure he or she knows you are serious, be firm. Often strangers or acquaintances will just accept a “no, thanks” without pressuring you anymore. However, other people such as friend may want to have an explanation. Having a ready-made explanation (“No, thanks, I’m not feeling too well tonight”) can make it easier. You may decide to just tell them directly that you do not want to use drugs anymore and why.
- **Use good body positioning.** Be aware of your posture and body positioning. To get your point across and show you are serious, it is best to look directly at the individual when refusing alcohol or drugs.
- **Suggest an alternative.** For example, if someone offers you a beer, you might say something like, “No, thanks. How about a coke?”
- **Change the subject.** This shows that you are not really interested in using drugs. For example, say, “No, thanks. What did you think of that new CD?”
- **Confront the aggressor.** Use this technique as a last resort. It can strain a relationship at times. If the individual is persistent you may ask, “Why is it so important to you that I do this?”