

## Documents

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### Alcohol use and interoception – A narrative review

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### Abstract

Interoception, defined as the ability to perceive and interpret body signals, may play an important role in alcohol use disorder (AUD). Earlier studies suggested an association between interoception impairment and known risk factors for AUD (e.g., alexithymia, emotion dysregulation, impulsivity, pain). Neurobiological studies show that the neurotoxicity of alcohol affects various elements of the interoceptive system (especially the insula) at structural and functional levels, with differential short/long term impacts. Conversely, primary interoceptive impairments may promote alcohol consumption and foster the evolution towards addiction. Despite convincing evidence demonstrating that interoception impairment may be an important contributor to the development and course of AUD, only a few studies directly evaluated interoceptive abilities in AUD. The research shows that interoceptive accuracy, the objective component of interoception, is lower in AUD individuals, and is correlated with craving and emotion dysregulation. Interoceptive sensibility is in turn higher in AUD individuals compared to healthy controls. Moreover, there is evidence that therapy focused on improving the ability to sense signals from the body in addiction treatment is effective. However, important methodological limitations in interoceptive measures persist, and it is therefore necessary to further investigate the associations between interoception and AUD. © 2021 Elsevier Inc.

### Author Keywords

Addiction; Alcohol use disorder; Interoception; Interoceptive system

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