

# Mini-Me's ALCOHOL RELAPSE

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NEWS

VERNE "MINI-ME" TROYER'S long-running battle with alcoholism has landed him back in rehab. The ENQUIRER has a pint-sized "Austin Powers" star in a treatment center near his hometown for 12 days. "Verne was in rehab and he's now in outpatient therapy," the 38-year-old's manager Elena Fondacaro tells ENQUIRER in an exclusive interview.

Alcoholism is an illness that comes on slowly - and Verne realized he was slipping. He decided to go back to rehab because he's determined to win his sobriety. "In early October 2002, The ENQUIRER reported that the 2-foot-7 Verne nearly died of alcohol poisoning going on a massive bender. At the same time, friends of the actor told me he drank himself into a stupor during a breakup with Genevieve

Gallen, the busty blonde who became his bride for two tumultuous months in 2004. Troyer later sought treatment at Wave-lengths rehab center in Malibu, Calif. But by February 2003, he was missing AA meetings, boozing and buying alcohol. The ENQUIRER reported.

In mid-November, the troubled actor checked into the Jim Gilmore Jr. Community Healing Center in Kalamazoo.

"He detoxed for two days and received therapy for another 10," said a friend of Troyer, who now appears in a popular Geico insurance commercial.

Verne nearly drank himself to death after his marriage fell apart



Verne was in rehab and now he's in outpatient therapy



"Verne checked into the Gilmore Center because it's near his parent's home in Centerville, Mich. With his folk's support, he celebrated a month of sobriety on Dec. 16."

His manager Elena concluded: "He'll be back in Los Angeles to re-

sume work by mid-January. He's determined to stay sober."

Verne became an overnight sensation playing Mini-Me, Dr. Evil's evil protege in the first of Mike Meyer's "Austin Powers" films in 1999. These days, he's mostly cast in high profile commercials, such as Geico insurance, Apple Computer and Sony PlayStation.

by ROBIN MIZRAHI