



ALCOHOL



Alcohol is a depressant drug, it works by increasing the brain's amount of the neurotransmitter GABA. This slows brain and body functions and depresses the central nervous system. Ethyl alcohol (ethanol) is the intoxicating form of alcohol that is produced by the fermentation of sugars and found in liquid form in beer, wine and distilled liquors.

EFFECTS

- Low to moderate amounts cause feelings of relaxation, lowered inhibition and increased sociability.
- Large amounts can cause dizziness, nausea, slurred speech, slower reflexes, sleepiness, impaired judgment and dehydration.
- Overdose (alcohol poisoning) can cause loss of motor control, blackouts, coma and death

RISKS

- Alcohol can affect decision-making, causing people to say or do things they normally wouldn't.
- Alcohol slows down motor skills and reaction time, making things like driving very dangerous.
- Because alcohol slows bodily functions; too much can cause someone to stop breathing and possibly die.
- Long term use can lead to dependence.

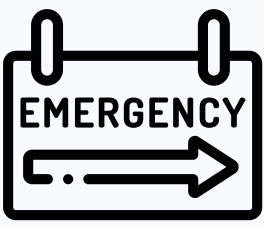
HARM REDUCTION TIPS

- Know how to recognize alcohol poisoning and how to respond. More about that on page 2.
- Abstinence is the most effective way to reduce the risk of harm; but if that's not for you, delaying use until at least age 18 can reduce the risks.
- If you are going to use alcohol
 - know and keep track of how much alcohol you are actually drinking. Different drinks have different amounts of alcohol in them. Learn how much alcohol is in a standard drink. See activity three in this [workbook](#) for more info.
 - avoid using alcohol with other drugs - especially other drugs that slow down the body like "benzos", sleeping pills or pain medication – mixing these can drastically increase the risk of overdose and death.
 - eat food while drinking
 - alternate with water and/or non alcoholic drinks
 - pace yourself /avoid shots and drinking games
- Use a buddy system and look out for each other.
- Plan ahead for a safe ride home.

Want more info? Check out [Dance Safe](#).



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ALCOHOL POISONING



Alcohol poisoning is a serious — and sometimes deadly — consequence of drinking large amounts of alcohol, often in a short period of time. Drinking too much too quickly can affect your breathing, heart rate, body temperature and gag reflex and potentially lead to a coma and death.

RECOGNIZING ALCOHOL POISONING: C.U.P.S.

Signs that could mean someone has alcohol poisoning:



C - Cold, clammy skin, blue lips



U - Unconsciousness



P - Puking, particularly while passed out



S - Slowed or irregular breathing (**a** healthy breathing rate for ages teens is 12-16 breaths per minute.)

WHAT TO DO



- Call 911 - this is a medical emergency and needs an immediate response. Follow the directions given



- If the person is unconscious/passed out and you can't wake them, place them in the recovery position - even when unconscious people can still vomit - this position helps to prevent them from choking on their vomit.



- Stay with them until help arrives.



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