

avoiding negative consequences

The hangover is characterized by:

- headaches
- muscle stiffness
- dry mouth
- general aches and pains

The major cause of these effects is **dehydration** resulting from your liver's efforts to metabolize the alcohol in your system. The severity of a hangover is related to drinking rate, peak blood alcohol concentration (BAC), and the amount of alcohol consumed. The faster you drink, the higher your peak BAC, and the more alcohol you consume, the greater your hangover.

to reduce hangovers:

- Stay hydrated by alternating alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages
- Slow absorption by eating before and while drinking
- Stay at the blue level longer by not drinking quickly
- Adopt the “lower-risk” drinking behaviors

does tolerance make a difference?

Tolerance is a measure of how much our body has adapted to alcohol. As tolerance goes up, our body adapts to a particular blood level of alcohol as being ‘normal’ for us. In the case of alcohol, research indicates that tolerance decreases the “euphoric” effects of alcohol, and increases hangover effects. You end up spending more time and money attempting to achieve alcohol's positive effects and it will take more time to recover from over-consumption.

As tolerance makes our system less sensitive to alcohol, it is also making us less aware of how impaired we really are. People with a high tolerance have even less sensitivity to the effects of alcohol and are even less likely to accurately gauge when they are impaired.

to reduce your risk of developing tolerance:

- Set a lower-risk drink limit (Keep to the Blue BAC level, 0.02-0.06).
- Drink at a moderate pace; 1 drink per hour is about how much your body can process.
- Drink two or fewer times a week.
- Take a break from drinking for at least one week every month and following any heavy use.
- If you already have a high tolerance – slowly reduce consumption until you are following the lower-risk guidelines discussed above.

This is one reason the American Medical Association recommends no more than 1 drink per day for women and no more than 2 drinks per day for men.

point of diminishing returns

Diminishing returns is the idea that the “high” you feel from consuming alcohol is reached at BAC's between .00 and .06, and further drinking does not produce greater euphoria. In fact, it has the opposite effect and leads to a greater chance of experiencing negative consequences. KEEP TO YOUR BLUE!

The Department of Student Health believes that decisions concerning alcohol consumption are a personal choice, and that students should make informed decisions regarding alcohol use. For those students who are not 21, the only legal choice is to abstain from drinking. For those students who choose to consume alcohol we recommend that you consume alcohol in a lower-risk manner to reduce negative outcomes associated with your alcohol use.

These educational materials promote lower-risk alcohol consumption for those who choose to drink, and should not be construed as endorsing or promoting underage consumption.

Info Source: Coordinator of Alcohol & Other Drug Prevention, Student Wellness Center wellness@osu.edu.

what is “a drink”?

ONE DRINK = 12oz beer = 4oz wine = 1.00oz shot
(100 proof liquor)

what is “BAC”?

Blood Alcohol Concentration is the percentage of alcohol in the blood as someone drinks. This means that for every 1,000 milliliters of blood, the body contains 1 milliliter of alcohol. For example, a BAC of .08 means that for every 1000 milliliters of blood, the body contains 8/10ths of a milliliter of alcohol.

Information adapted from Syndistar, Inc. www.intheknowzone.com

Use your BAC card to see where your specific blue zone is and how you can stay there.

keep to the **BLUE BAC** level

0.02 – 0.03 = No loss of coordination, slight euphoria and loss of shyness

0.04 – 0.06 = Feeling of relaxation, lowered inhibitions, some minor impairment of reasoning and memory, lowering of cautions

0 drinks...

...if you're driving, pregnant, taking medication or have alcohol or other drug dependencies. It's always O.K. not to drink! This is the lowest-risk choice.

r e s o u r c e s

student health & social norms marketing

<http://www.virginia.edu/studenthealth/hp/norms/resources.html>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):

243-5150

www.virginia.edu/studenthealth/caps

Peer Health Educators (PHE):

924-1509

www.virginia.edu/studenthealth/phe.html

center for alcohol and substance education (CASE)

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Team (ADAPT):

924-5276

www.virginia.edu/case

CHOICES Class:

2 session class focusing on prevention and reducing risk for all alcohol-related health issue

924-5276

www.virginia.edu/case

community

Alcoholics Anonymous:

293-6565

Friends of Bill W. (Students seeking recovery in the tradition of AA, Dean Laushway):

924-7133

Region 10 (need-based resource providing counseling):

972-1800

lower-risk

drinking

guidelines

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