

## “I’m still gonna drink...”

The best way to avoid the things mentioned in this brochure is to avoid drinking altogether. Also remember that if you’re under 21, it’s illegal to drink – and if you’re older, it’s illegal to provide minors with alcohol.

If you choose to keep drinking, there are tons of ways you can do so, without putting yourself and others in danger, and the risk factor is way down.

At lower blood alcohol levels, you get a buzz. While some of alcohol’s depressant effects are there, they are much less noticeable than at higher levels. *When you exceed a BAC of .05%-.06%, the positive effects and feelings become less positive and more negative.* So if you still choose to drink, pick a limit ahead of time that will keep you below .06%. How do you do that? Check this out:

Time Drinking: 1 Hour 2 Hours 3 Hours  
**(Women)** How many drinks you should have:

Body Weight: 100	1	2	2
110	1	2	2
120	2	2	2
130	2	2	3
140	2	2	3
150	2	3	3
160	2	3	3
170	2	3	4
180	3	3	4

Time Drinking: 1 Hour 2 Hours 3 Hours  
**(Men)** How many drinks you should have:

Body Weight: 120	2	2	3
130	2	3	3
140	2	3	4
150	3	3	4
160	3	3	4
170	3	4	4
180	3	4	5
190	3	4	5
200	4	4	5

## Anything Else I Can Do?

Consider taking the following steps to reduce the risk of negative consequences from happening:

**Plan ahead.** Set a reasonable limit and stick to it. Remember to plan ahead for transportation, too.

**Keep track.** Bottle caps in a pocket, line up empties, tally marks on your hand... whatever works.

**Slow down.** Pace yourself. If you set a limit of 4 drinks over 3 hours, that doesn’t mean pounding 3 instantly and having a fourth one 3 hours later.

**Space your drinks.** Alternate alcohol with non-alcoholic beverages. Worried about getting dehydrated? You should...

**Drink water in between.** This will help you reduce dehydration that occurs with drinking and plays a major part in hangovers.

**Eat before you drink.** Food slows down absorption and helps decrease the stomach irritation caused by alcohol. If you’re worried about calories you might get from food, remember that one beer equals one hot dog! You’ll likely get fewer calories from what you eat than from what you drink, so drinking less can address this concern.



## Making Safe Decisions With Alcohol

**Now that you’re done with your AIR, you’ll have choices to make about decisions about your use of alcohol.** The HAWES staff has put together this pamphlet focusing on alcohol and its effects, along with steps you can take to minimize the likelihood of any unwanted effects.

Hopefully, you find that this brochure answers some questions you have or might have in the future.



Health Education Office  
 Center for Student Development  
 Room #211  
 Phone: 401-254-3413

## Hey! How Many Drinks is That?

Big cup? There's probably more than one drink in it. A "standard drink" isn't defined by the cup, bottle, or glass it comes in. Instead, it has to do with how much ethyl alcohol it contains. Here's how many ounces of different types of drinks equal one standard drink:

Beer = 12 oz.

Microbrews or wine coolers = 10 oz.

Malt liquor, Canadian beer, or Ice Beer = 8 oz.

Ice Malt Liquor = 6 oz.

Wine = 4 oz.

Fortified wine = 2.5 oz.

Hard alcohol (80 proof) = 1.25 oz.

Hard alcohol (100 proof) = 1 oz.

*If you decide to keep drinking, think about the size of the container, and don't accept a drink when you don't know what's in it.*



**What does alcohol do?** Alcohol absorbs into the bloodstream, which results in a rising blood alcohol content, (BAC). It slows down reaction time, coordination, and at higher doses, even breathing and heart rate. Effects include:

.02% BAC = feelings of relaxation begin

.04% BAC = relaxation intensifies (buzzed)

.06% BAC = lack of judgement affects decision-making

.08% BAC = impairment of motor skills & risk of nausea from here on out

.10% BAC = clear decline in judgement, coordination, & reaction time

.15%-.25% BAC = risk of passing out, losing consciousness, death

.40%-.45% = fatal

## How Come Some People Can Hold Their Alcohol Better?



Some people find that it takes more alcohol for them to feel the same effect you'd expect given their BAC. Some say that they "hold" their alcohol "better". Well, not quite. This means that they've developed tolerance. See those numbers and effects on the bottom left of this brochure? If someone has tolerance, their BAC doesn't change – 2 people of the same weight with different tolerance levels will both be at the same BAC if they drink the same amount. It might just take more alcohol for a person with tolerance to reach the expected effects. **Consider the downside: it's expensive to have tolerance.** No matter how much tolerance a person has, reaction time is still affected, and risk of death is always a possibility.

## Drinking and My Body

Alcohol is made up entirely of "empty calories", which are harder to burn off than "regular calories", and can't be used for energy. Think of it this way: an average beer has 150 calories. However, these are empty calories – and the empty calorie equivalent of one beer is a hot dog. **Drink 5 beers? You essentially just ate 4 hot dogs.** If you're trying to gain weight, eat or drink something the body can actually use for energy.

## Drinking and My Body (continued)

What happens to your body when you drink?

**Dehydration.** Alcohol is a diuretic, which means it makes you lose water. Dehydration causes dizziness, nausea, diarrhea, and cramping.

**Muscular effects.** Drinking can reduce protein synthesis and cause a decrease in muscle build-up, along with weakening muscles in the extremities.

**Cardiovascular effects.** Drinking weakens the heart muscle and raises blood pressure.

The morning after:

(Take all of the above, and then add...)

**"Morning After" effects.** Alcohol is toxic to the body, which is why some people throw up after drinking too much. They get hangovers and feel completely miserable the next day. The body undergoes a recovery period, and people usually feel "off" during this time, which can affect your ability to focus and think.

**Throwing off the sleep cycle.**

ZzZzzzz... as human beings, we love sleep. But many college kids will use it to "sleep off" a buzz or go to bed with alcohol in their system. This throws off the sleep cycle, and often leads to anxiety, irritability, and jumpiness the next day, along with fatigue and generally not feeling like yourself. After one night of drinking, it can take up to two nights for your sleep to go back to normal.