

LifeAdviser Special Edition



How to Celebrate Safely This Season

We all want to celebrate during the holidays, but more people are likely to drink beyond their limits during this season than at other times of the year. We often put ourselves and others at risk because we don't understand how alcohol affects us during an evening of celebratory drinking.

Before You Celebrate — Plan Ahead

Because individuals are so different, it is difficult to give specific advice about drinking. But certain facts are clear—there is no way to speed up the brain's recovery from alcohol and no way to make good decisions when you are drinking too much, too fast.

So, this holiday season, do not underestimate the effects of alcohol. Don't believe you can beat them, or they may beat you.

What's a standard drink?

Source: <https://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/>



12 fl oz
Regular beer
(About 5% alcohol)



5 fl oz
Table wine
(About 12% alcohol)



1.5 fl oz
80-proof spirits
or liquor
(About 40% alcohol)

Ten Strategies for Drinking Responsibly

- 
1. Stay with the same group of friends the entire time drinking
 2. Travel safely: Choose a designated driver or use a transportation app like Uber or Lyft during your entire outing
 3. Eat before and/or during drinking
 4. Keep track of how many standard drinks you consume and have no more than one per hour
 5. Stick with only one kind of alcohol
 6. Avoid drinking games
 7. Alternate alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages
 8. Don't exceed a set number of drinks—men should drink no more than 4 and women no more than 3 per day
 9. Have a friend let you know when you've had enough
 10. Remember: even after you stop drinking alcohol stays in your system impairing judgment and coordination for hours

Source: www.niaaa.nih.gov

What's a *designated driver*?

A designated driver is someone who doesn't have any alcohol before and during your outing, not just the person who's had the fewest drinks.

Sobering Up – Myths and Facts

MYTH: You can drive as long as you are not slurring your words or acting erratically.

FACT: The coordination needed for driving is compromised long before the signs of intoxication are visible and one's reaction time is slowed. Plus, the sedative effects of alcohol increase the risk of nodding off or losing attention behind the wheel.



MYTH: Drink coffee. Caffeine will sober you up.

FACT: Caffeine may help with drowsiness but not with the effects of alcohol on decision-making or coordination. The body needs time to metabolize (break down) alcohol and then to return to normal. Also, when the caffeine wears off, there are the increased sedative effects of alcohol and post-caffeine sleepiness. There are no quick cures—only time will help.



MYTH: The warm feeling you get from drinking insulates you from the cold of winter. When you're drinking, there's no need to wear a coat when it's cold outside.

FACT: Alcohol widens the tiny blood vessels right under the skin, so they quickly fill with warm blood. This makes you feel warm or hot and can cause your skin to flush and perspire. But your body temperature is actually dropping because while alcohol is pulling warmth from your core to the skin surface, it is also depressing the area of your brain that controls temperature regulation. In cold environments, this can lead to hypothermia. So, wear a coat when it's cold outside, particularly if you are drinking alcohol.

Holiday Drinking Trends

16%
of adults say they drink more than usual during the holidays

22%
of those who have attended a holiday work party have felt pressured to drink

50%
of people say that alcohol plays a role in their family's holiday gatherings

96%
of adults went to work hung over after a party, or know someone who did

The Odds Are Not in Your Favor



91+ Million
Americans take holiday road trips between December 23 and January 3

42+ Million
Americans travel by car for Thanksgiving

48%
increase in DUI violations on Christmas Eve

106%
increase in DUI violations on New Year's Eve

22%
increase in DUI violations from the Wednesday before Thanksgiving through January 2



Source: www.scramsystems.com/resources/holiday-resources/

If you drink more than you planned

Find a designated driver service to get yourself and your car home safely at www.drinkinganddriving.org/designated-driver-services/.

If your ride home has been drinking

Your first ride with UBER can be free up to \$20 with the special DrinkingAndDriving.Org code DADO. <https://get.uber.com/invite/DADO>.

Reach CONCERN: EAP – Call 800.344.4222 or visit <https://employees.concern-eap.com>