

too top-heavy with refined sugars & fats. And alcohol, even in moderate amounts, can interfere with certain body functions - particularly your body's ability to absorb & utilize certain nutrients.

**VITAMIN A:** As far as we know, moderate drinking doesn't seem to have any effect on your need for vitamin A.

**VITAMIN E:** There's evidence to suggest that moderate amounts of alcohol actually help to counteract vitamin E deficiencies.

**THE B VITAMINS:** Several of the more serious diseases connected with alcoholism have been linked to severe vitamin B deficiencies. The most common lack in heavy drinkers involves vitamin B<sub>1</sub> - thiamine. In milder forms among heavy drinkers, thiamine deficiency produces muscle cramps & general weakness. B<sub>12</sub> deficiencies can produce diarrhoea, gastritis & dermatitis. Losses of folic acid may bring on anemia, one of the more common problems associated with heavy drinking. And vitamin B deficiencies in general can trigger symptoms ranging from chronic fatigue to depression.

**TRACE MINERALS:** Alcohol tends to wash magnesium out of your system. Unless this content is replenished you could suffer from hypomagnesemia, a condition whose symptoms include nausea, weakness, tremors & irritability.

**A VITAMIN PROGRAMME FOR THE MODERATE DRINKER:** The following nutrients, on the basis of recent research, have been found to be particularly important to people who drink. Here is what I recommend on a daily basis:

Vitamin B1	50mg	Equally important to good health, but not as directly related to drinking are the other nutrients - Vitamins A, C, D & E. Be certain you get some daily!
Vitamin E2	30mg	
Niacinamide	50mg	
Vitamin B6	100mg	
Calcium Pantothenate	30mg	
Magnesium	70mg	
Zinc	50mg	

**BASIC STRATEGY FOR HEALTHY DRINKING**

1. Put something in your stomach other than booze. Foods rich in protein - eggs, cheese, meat - are good because they slow down the rate of alcohol absorbed into the bloodstream. Be careful of highly salted foods.
2. Keep track of how much alcohol you're actually taking into your system. Limit yourself to one alcohol dosage an hour (2 highballs or 2 glasses of wine).
3. Sip, don't gulp. The quicker you drink, the more likely you are to have an adverse reaction - usually the morning after!
4. Don't drink when you're not feeling well.
5. Always know what you're drinking. Avoid home-brewed alcoholic beverages.
6. Don't mix alcohol with drugs.
7. Forget the 'one for the road'!
8. Go easy after you've drunk more than usual - give yourself a few alcohol-free days before you resume your normal drinking patterns.
9. Be honest with yourself. Know when you've had too much!

Watch what you drink - that rum & gin mixed with fruit juice may seem harmless enough when you drink it but it carries just as much punch as a martini!

**HOW TO SURVIVE A HANGOVER**

THE SYMPTOMS OF A HANGOVER are usually one of the following goodies: a headache, nausea, an upset stomach, dizziness, fatigue, diarrhoea. A hangover is your central nervous system's way of paying you back for what you did to it. Regardless of what your local bartender might tell you, there are as yet no known cures for a hangover. But one of the most frequently recommended foods to combat hangover misery is honey. Honey is high in fructose, the sugar that has been shown experimentally to accelerate the oxidation of alcohol in the liver. Some researchers now contend that your attitudes about drinking - how guilty you are about getting drunk, for instance - will influence how you feel.

**EASING THE HANGOVER HEADACHE:** If you have a queasy stomach along with the headache, don't rush for the aspirin. If the headache is a mild one, see if you can wait it out for a few hours. If the pain is severe, take only buffered aspirin or an analgesic that doesn't have any aspirin in it. Some people find that a hot shower, with the water against the top & back of your head can

ease the pain of a hangover headache. Or perhaps try applying hot towels to your forehead. Try your best to relax. Don't read or rush around. Tough as it may seem, try not to pay any attention to the headache.

**SLEEPING UP A SCUR STOMACH:** Be careful of what you eat. Avoid anything - coffee, for instance - that might irritate your stomach. If you have nausea & it isn't too severe, bicarbonate of soda or some other stomach-settling medicine will usually bring relief. Avoid heavy foods & very spicy foods.

**HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS YOUR SEX LIFE**

**ALCOHOL HAS THE CAPACITY TO SUPPRESS INHIBITIONS** and any substance that reduces our inhibitions in general is obviously going to have some effect on our attitudes about sex. Shakespeare put it well in his play, *Macbeth*, where the porter is talking about the sexual properties of alcohol. "Lechery, sir," the porter observes, "provokes and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery..." Alcohol does stimulate. There is evidence that when the blood alcohol level of an average male is between 0.10 & 0.15, he is able to prolong erection & defer climax, but once he gets beyond that level, it's downhill all the way. Sex researchers I've spoken with tell me that alcohol in moderate amounts seems to relax people enough so that they enjoy sex more & tend to perform better at it. But it's not a love potion & if you drink too much it can squelch whatever love impulses you may feel.

**HYPOLYCEMIA**

**HYPOLYCEMIA** is a problem that exists whenever your blood sugar level is lower than necessary in order to meet your body's energy needs. Common symptoms are fatigue, depression, anxiety & irritability. If the level drops too low, you can pass out.

- TO AVOID IT:**
1. Don't drink after long fasting periods. If you've skipped lunch, don't be in a hurry for a cocktail before supper.
  2. Drink slowly. You give your body more chance to adjust.
  3. Be careful about sugary mixers.
  4. Don't drink too much after a tiring exercise workout.
  5. Watch your diet. Get some protein at every meal, especially at breakfast.

**DANGEROUS MIXES: ALCOHOL & DRUGS**

**IF YOU DRINK & TAKE A DRUG AT THE SAME TIME**, the two can react in a way that chemists describe as "synergistically" - that is, the effects of either the alcohol or the drug or both are much stronger because of the combination than they would be if you were only taking one. This can push up your blood pressure, irritate your stomach, put you to sleep - or kill you. We tend to forget that when we drink an alcoholic beverage, we're taking a drug - and a powerful drug at that. Even caffeine, in large amounts, puts a great deal of stress on your cardiovascular system.

**ALCOHOL & YOUR HEART**

THERE IS A GROWING BODY OF EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST THAT MODERATE DRINKERS HAVE A LOWER HEART-ATTACK RATE THAN NON-DRINKERS. One study found that the risk of heart attacks among non-drinkers was a good 30% higher than the risk among moderate drinkers, regardless of sex, age or previous medical history. And the findings revealed that the highest risk of heart attacks was found among men who used to drink and then quit. Whatever their mischief alcohol may cause in your body, its impact - in moderate amounts - on your heart is by no means harmful.

**ALCOHOLISM: COULD IT HAPPEN TO YOU?**

NOBODY BECOMES AN ALCOHOLIC OVERNIGHT. It takes years & there are plenty of warnings along the way. The only problem is that one of the main symptoms of the problem is a refusal - or inability - to admit that the problem exists. So be honest and remember that nobody is immune to alcohol abuse.

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*You Can Drink and Stay Healthy*

THE SUMMARY OF THE EFFECTS OF DRUG INTERACTIONS WITH ALCOHOL

Drug Group	Effect
Anesthetics	Can increase gastrointestinal bleeding, with or without aspirin
Antacids	Antacids containing aluminum can deplete phosphate
Anticoagulants	Increased anticoagulant effect with acute intoxication, but decreased effect after chronic alcohol use
Antidepressants	Increased sedative effect. Acute effects when antidepressants with MAO inhibitors combine with ethanol
Antibiotics	Reduced absorption of antibiotic
Anticholinergics	Increased sedative effect; can reduce driving skills
Antihypertensives	Increased lowering of blood pressure, along with increased sedation
Barbiturates	Increased sedative effect; frequently severe and lasting symptoms in cardiac arrest or death
Diuretics	Lowered blood pressure
Heart Stimulants, e.g., Digoxin, Nitroglycerine	Increased effect on heart; arrhythmias
Muscle Relaxants, e.g., Darvon	Increased depressant effect
Minor Tranquilizers, e.g., Miltivan, Valium, Librium	Increased effect of alcohol

Source: P. D. Stinson, "Adverse Interactions of Drugs," in *The Medical Letter*, 20th January 1979. Also P. D. Stinson, "Drug Interactions: Pharmacokinetics, Laws and Precedents," 1979.

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ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: A GENERAL VIEW

Beverage	Alcohol Content	Other Ingredients
Beer	Between 3.2 and 8 per cent	Water, yeast, hops
Bourbon	Between 40 and 50 per cent	Water, resins (from wood) and other congeners
Brandy	Between 40 and 50 per cent	Sugar and other flavourings
Gin	Between 40 and 50 per cent	Water, resins, botanicals
Rum	Between 40 and 50 per cent	Caramel
Scotch	Between 40 and 50 per cent	Water, resins
Tequila	Between 40 and 50 per cent	
Vodka	Between 40 and 50 per cent	
Wine	Between 14 per cent for table wine and 19 and 21 per cent for fortified wine	Herbs and spices in sparkling wine

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VITAMINS & MINERALS

Nutrients	Sources	Functions in Body	Results of Deficiency
Vitamin A	Fish liver oil, egg yolks, dairy products and fortified margarine, green and yellow vegetables	Eye sensitivity and skin growth	Night blindness or childhood blindness; skin rashes
Vitamin D	Fish liver oil, egg yolk, liver, sunlight	Calcium and phosphorus absorption, bone growth	Rickets and bone malformations
Vitamin E	Vegetable oil, wheat germ, peas, margarine, egg yolk, leafy vegetables	Cell chemistry and strength	Red blood cell problems; upset in muscle chemistry
Vitamin K	Pork, liver, vegetable oil, leafy vegetables	Blood coagulation	Haemorrhaging
*Thiamine B <sub>1</sub>	Dried yeast, whole grains, nuts, peas, potatoes	Carbohydrate metabolism, nerve cell and heart functions	Fatigue; acute central nervous system symptoms
*Riboflavin B <sub>2</sub>	Dairy, meat, eggs, cereal	Energy and protein use	Eye and skin problems
*Niacin	Yeast, liver, meat, fish, peas, grain	Body chemistry	Pellagra and central nervous system
*B <sub>6</sub>	Yeast, organ meat, cereals, fish, peas	Cell function and metabolism	Anaemia; skin problems
*Folic acid	Green leafy vegetables, fruit, organ meats, liver, yeast	Healthy red blood cells	Anaemia; gastrointestinal problems
*B <sub>12</sub>	Liver, meat, eggs, dairy products	Nerves, blood, and DNA synthesis	Pernicious anaemia; tapeworm
C	Citrus fruits, tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage, peppers	Wound healing, tissue growth, possible and antiviral agent	Scurvy
Potassium	Milk, bananas, raisins, prunes	Muscles and nerves	Cardiac problems
Calcium	Dairy, meat, cereals, beans, fruits, vegetables	Bones and teeth	Hyperexcitability; bone problems
Phosphorus	Dairy, meat, poultry, fish, nuts, cereal, peas	Bones and teeth	
*Magnesium	Green leafy vegetables, nuts, cereals, seafood	Bones and teeth	Nerve and muscle problems
*Zinc	Vegetables	Enzymes and wound healing	Sexual organ malfunctions; stunted growth

\* Indicates that the absorption and utilization of this nutrient can be impaired by alcohol intake.