

# ALCOHOL EDUCATION BASICS GUIDE



VIRGINIA ABC  
EDUCATION AND PREVENTION  
TOOLKIT SERIES



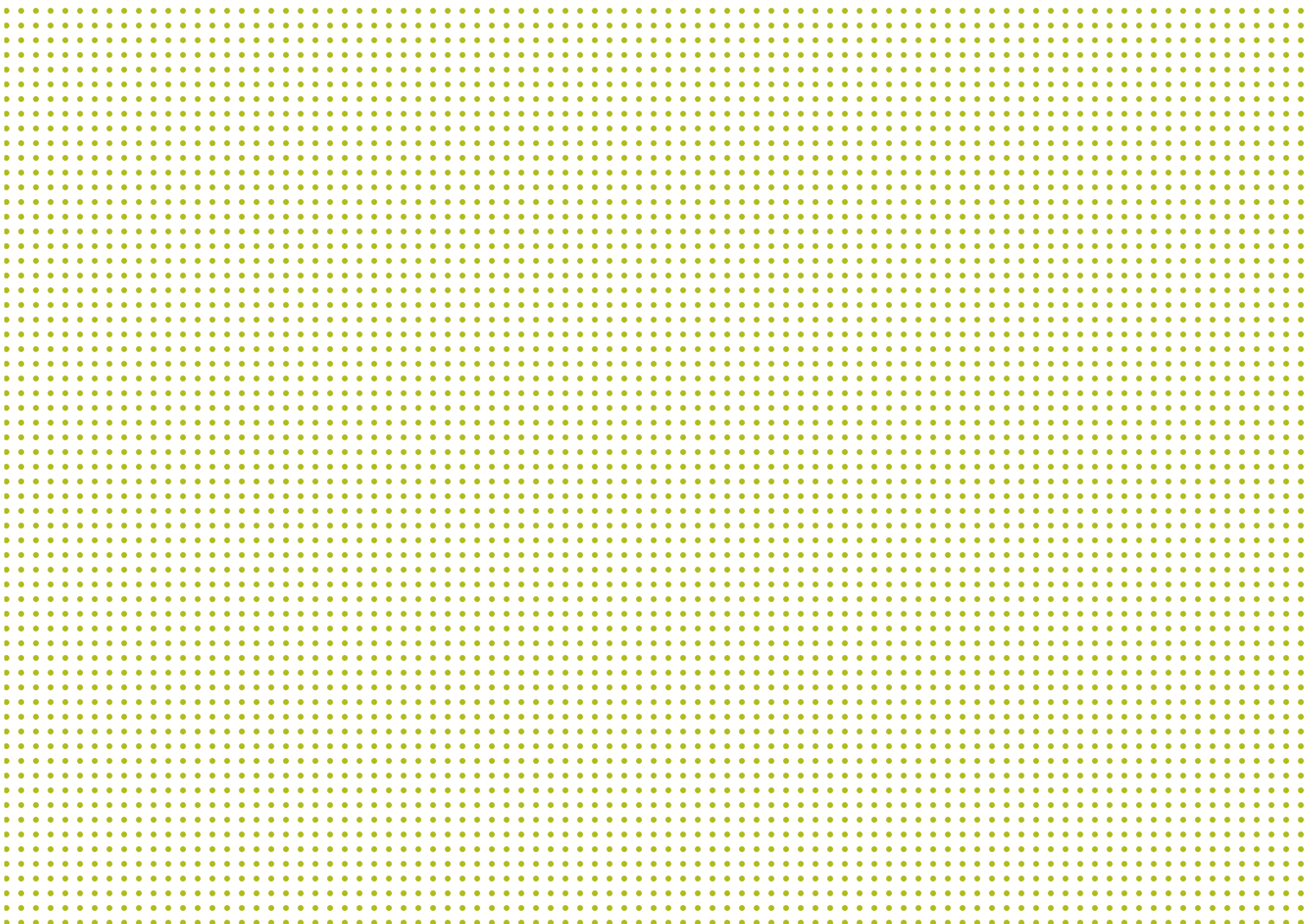
# CONTENTS

Alcohol education basics.....	3
Virginia law .....	4
Underage drinking and the brain.....	6
Alcohol and the brain.....	7
What is alcohol?.....	8
Calculating standard size drinks.....	9
What is BAC? .....	9
BAC levels and how they can affect you.....	12
How can I estimate my BAC level? .....	14
How long does it take to eliminate alcohol from my body? .....	16
What is binge drinking? .....	18
What are the health risks of binge drinking? .....	18
Alcohol poisoning.....	19
The biphasic effect of alcohol.....	20
Alcohol tolerance .....	21
Did you know? .....	22
How to be an active bystander .....	24
Methods of bystander intervention .....	25
Alcohol use disorder.....	26
Tips for responsible drinking.....	27
Resources .....	28



# ALCOHOL EDUCATION BASICS

This toolkit provides information for any group, organization or individual to use during trainings, activities and events. It provides facts on the risks and harms associated with alcohol and **steps for making safe and healthy decisions.**



# VIRGINIA LAW

## QUICK FACTS

THE MISSION OF VIRGINIA ABC IS FOUNDED ON THE LAWS ESTABLISHED BY THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE REGULATIONS DEVELOPED BY VIRGINIA ABC'S BOARD.



### VIRGINIA IS A CONTROL STATE

The state government (**Virginia ABC**) regulates and monitors the supply and sale of beer, wine and liquor.

### BUREAU OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Virginia ABC is charged with enforcing the laws and regulations pertaining to the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.

Virginia ABC special agents have full police powers and serve as a key resource for information about Virginia alcohol laws.

Virginia ABC's Bureau of Law Enforcement has nine regional offices and one satellite office that serve as points of contact for campus police, citizens and licensees.

### CODE OF VIRGINIA

The Code of Virginia (COV) contains the laws (statutes) of the Commonwealth.

- ▶ Title 4.1 is the Alcoholic Beverage Control Act.
- ▶ Title 18.2 establishes crimes and offenses, including driving under the influence, public intoxication and possession of false identification.

### VIRGINIA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

The Virginia Administrative Code (VAC) contains the regulations of state agencies, including Virginia ABC. Title 3 contains the regulations of the Board.

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**VIRGINIA ABC SPECIAL AGENTS PRIMARILY ENFORCE THESE LAWS AND REGULATIONS, WHICH FOCUS ON LICENSEES AND THE SALE AND/OR POSSESSION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.**

# VIRGINIA LAW

## CLASS 1 MISDEMEANORS



### DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE (DUI) (COV 18.2-266)

- ▶ The Commonwealth of Virginia's Zero Tolerance Law makes driving while intoxicated by any amount of alcohol a serious criminal offense for drivers younger than 21. Virginia defines the legal limit for driving while intoxicated at a BAC of 0.08% for those 21 years of age and older.



### FRAUDULENT USE OF A DRIVER'S LICENSE, ID CARD OR OTHER IDENTIFICATION MATERIALS (COV 4.1-305)

- ▶ It is illegal to use another's identification as one's own.
- ▶ It is illegal to possess or sell an ID for the purpose of establishing a false identification.
- ▶ Persons who possess, use or distribute fake IDs are charged with a Class 1 misdemeanor.



### UNDERAGE POSSESSION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES (COV 4.1-305)

- ▶ It is illegal for anyone under 21 to possess any alcoholic beverage.
- ▶ No one under 21 may use an altered or fake ID such as a driver's license, birth certificate or student identification card to establish a false identification or false age to purchase an alcoholic beverage.



### SOCIAL PROVIDING (COV 4.1-306)

- ▶ It is illegal to purchase or provide alcohol to anyone under the age of 21.

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## CONVICTION OF A CLASS 1 MISDEMEANOR CAN RESULT IN:



- LOSS OF DRIVER'S LICENSE FOR UP TO ONE YEAR
- FINES UP TO \$2,500
- 50 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE
- UP TO ONE YEAR IN JAIL

# UNDERAGE DRINKING AND THE BRAIN

The brain is still developing until people reach their twenties. Regular, especially heavy, drinking before this time impairs judgement, learning and memory. Alcohol can damage the two key areas of the brain that control cognitive reasoning and memory or learning. The prefrontal lobe of the brain controls thinking, planning, sound judgment decisions and impulse control. The prefrontal lobe develops early while the areas of the brain that improve self-control don't develop until the early twenties. Research also shows that heavy alcohol use by adolescents reduces the hippocampus by 10%, which is the area of the brain that is responsible for memories and learning.



BELOW IS A SHORT LIST OF EFFECTS THE BODY FACES WITH SHORT-TERM, CONTINUED AND LONG-TERM HEAVY ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION:



## SHORT-TERM EFFECTS

- Slower reaction times and reflexes
- Heavy sweating
- Blurry vision
- Nausea and vomiting
- Lowered reasoning ability



## CONTINUED EFFECTS

- Memory loss
- Anxiety and depression
- Muscle cramps
- Slowed breathing
- Impaired sports performance



## LONG-TERM EFFECTS

- Cirrhosis, or permanent damage of the liver
- Nervous system damage
- Muscles shrinking
- Hallucinations
- Death



# ALCOHOL AND THE BRAIN

▶ Alcohol is a **depressant**. The more you drink, specific parts of the brain become greatly affected.

▶ The **cerebrum** controls functions like vision, reasoning, emotions and recognition. As the amount of alcohol consumed increases, vision, movement and speech are impaired.

▶ The **cerebellum** coordinates movement. Alcohol causes problems with coordination, reflexes and balance.

▶ Drinking alcohol causes the **hypothalamus** to raise your blood pressure, increase hunger, thirst and the urge to urinate.

▶ The **hippocampus** is the part of the brain where memories are made. Too much alcohol can cause a person to have trouble remembering entire events, also known as a blackout.

▶ The **medulla** controls breathing and your heart rate, which can become severely affected at high blood alcohol levels.

## ⊗ ALCOHOL-INDUCED BLACKOUTS

A blackout is a period of time in which an intoxicated person who has consumed a large amount of alcohol cannot recall key details of an event or the event in its entirety. Just one blackout can lead to permanent brain damage and other negative consequences.

# WHAT IS ALCOHOL?

Alcohol is created naturally when sugars in grains, vegetables and fruits are fermented. Distilled spirits or liquors go through an additional process of evaporation and condensation. Alcohol proof for distilled spirits is equal to twice the percentage of alcohol content by volume. For example, a standard 1.5 ounce serving of liquor that is 80 proof contains 40% alcohol by volume (ABV).

Standard drinks contain approximately the same amount of alcohol and are helpful in estimating blood alcohol concentration (BAC).



One standard drink typically contains about 14 grams of pure alcohol which amounts to:



- ▶ 12 ounces of regular beer with a **5% ABV**.
- ▶ 5 ounces of wine with a **12% ABV**.
- ▶ 1.5 ounces of 80 proof distilled spirits with a **40% ABV**.

Alcohol is not always served in the same size constraints of a standard drink. **Additionally, the ABV in craft beers, wines, liquors and mixed drinks are not always equivalent to the ABV of a standard drink.**

# CALCULATING STANDARD DRINKS

To calculate the amount of standard drinks being consumed, multiply the number of ounces in the drink by the ABV percentage decimal. Then, multiply that number by two to find the approximate number of standard drink sizes the beverage contains.

**Example:** You order a 16 ounce beer that has a 9% ABV. How many standard drinks are you consuming?

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$$16 \text{ (OUNCES)} \times 0.09 \text{ (ABV\%)} \times 2$$
$$=$$
$$2.88 \text{ STANDARD DRINKS } $$

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Since the liver processes one standard drink per hour, being able to track how many standard drinks are being consumed can improve one's ability to make responsible decisions and reduce the negative consequences associated with drinking too much alcohol.

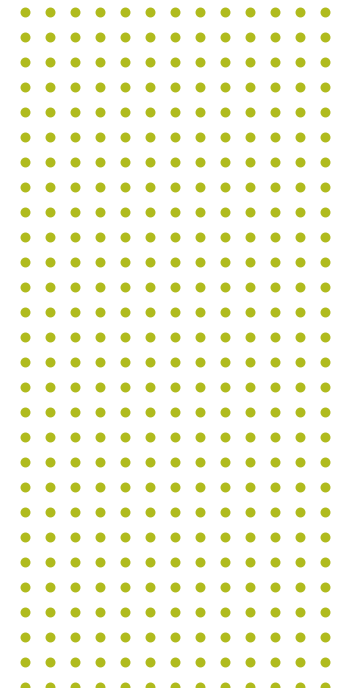
## WHAT IS BLOOD ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION (BAC)?

BAC is the amount of alcohol that is present in the bloodstream. For example, having a BAC of 0.10 percent means there is about one drop of alcohol for every 1,000 drops of blood present in the body. At certain BAC levels, alcohol has been shown to alter a person's visual functions and perceptions, affecting his or her ability to react, concentrate or pay attention, process information and operate a vehicle.



# WHAT IS BAC?

BLOOD ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION (BAC) IS THE AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL THAT IS PRESENT IN THE BLOOD STREAM.



THE WAY A PERSON REACTS TO ALCOHOL DEPENDS ON:



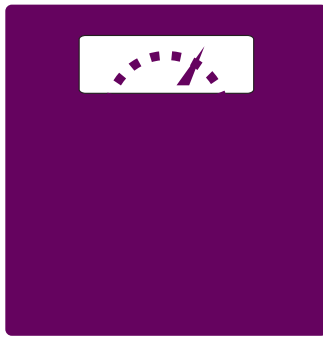
## STRENGTH OF DRINK

Drinks can have different effects based on their composition. Mixing a drink with a carbonated soda, for example, will quicken the effects of the alcohol due to the carbonation bubbles.

## RATE OF CONSUMPTION

Taking shots or chugging drinks will increase the amount of alcohol absorbed into the system. The liver metabolizes alcohol at an average rate of one drink (12 oz. beer, 5 oz. wine, 1.5 oz. of 80 proof distilled spirits) per hour. If a person drinks faster than this, the remainder of the alcohol will circulate in the bloodstream until the liver is able to metabolize all of the alcohol.



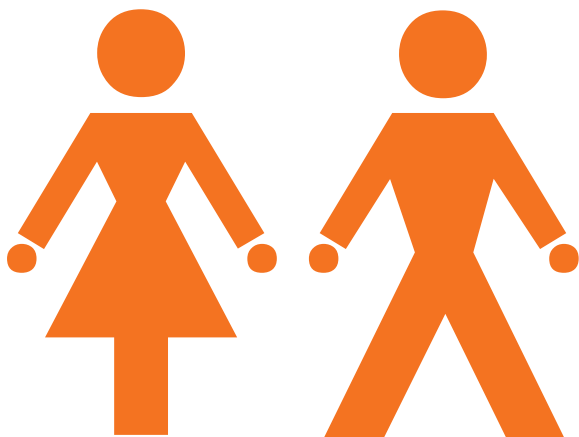


## BODY WEIGHT

People who weigh less will generally be affected more quickly by alcohol than people who carry more weight. This is because people with a greater body weight have more blood and water in their bodies, which assists in the dilution of alcohol.

## FOOD

A full stomach slows the absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream. Drinking on an empty stomach, however, will cause the BAC to rise more rapidly since there is no food to assist in absorption.



## GENDER

Women tend to reach a higher BAC faster because they have a higher fat to muscle ratio than men. Fat repels alcohol, whereas muscle absorbs it. Therefore, it takes lesser amounts of alcohol for a woman to show signs of its effects since women are usually smaller, and have less muscle to absorb the alcohol.

## DRUG USE

The use of other legal or illegal drugs can increase the effects of alcohol and may cause a dangerous, unpredictable outcome.



# BAC LEVELS AND HOW THEY CAN AFFECT YOU



**.02%**

- Relaxation
- Loss of inhibitions
- Mild intensification of existing mood
- Lightheadedness
- May impair your ability to drive



**.05%**

- Mild euphoria
- Emotions and behavior become exaggerated
- Deficits in fine motor skills
- Delayed reaction time
- Lack of recognition of these deficits



**.08%**

- Mild speech impairment
- Balance is affected
- Sight and hearing are reduced
- Impaired motor skills and judgment such that one's ability to evaluate or respond to sexual situations is affected



**.10%**

- Lack of coordination and balance
- Memory and judgment are severely impaired
- Recognition of impairment is lost
- Emotions are exaggerated to the extreme point of belligerence in some cases

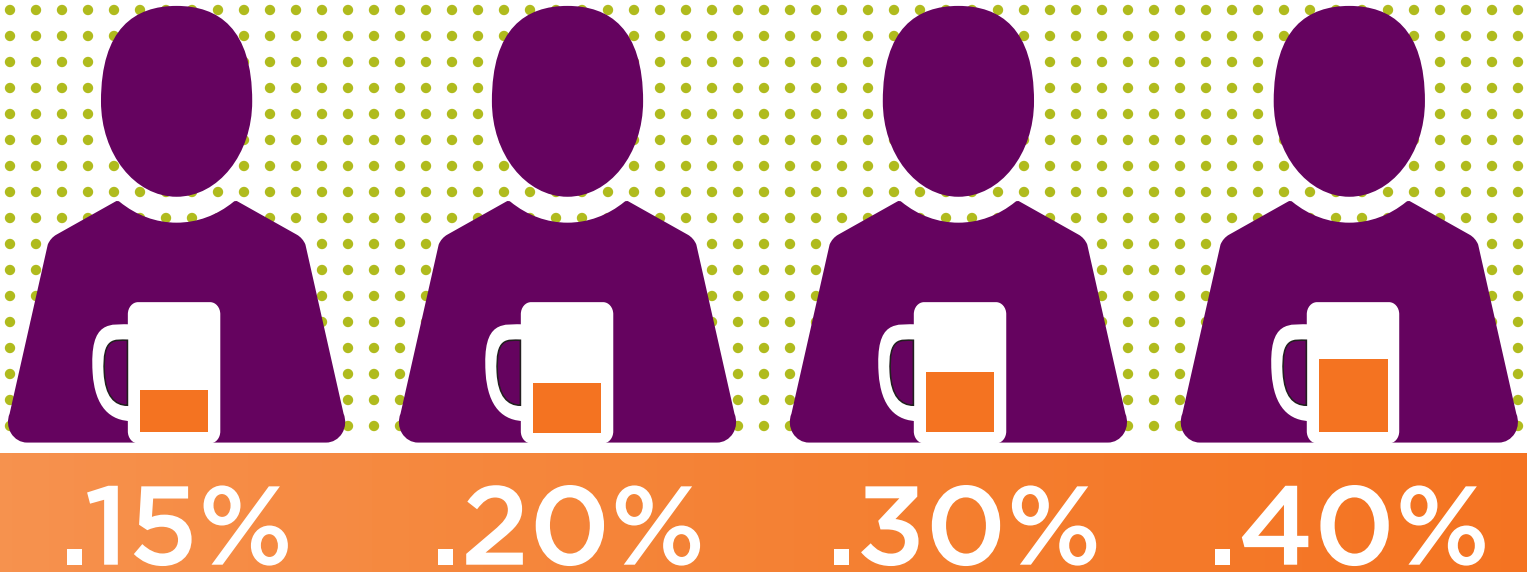
## **WARNING ZONE** **0.00% - 0.06% BAC**

When BAC is within this zone, the euphoric effects of alcohol are experienced, causing a release of dopamine from the brain.

- ▶ Virginia defines the legal limit for driving while intoxicated at a BAC of .08 percent for those 21 years of age or older

## MEASUREMENT ▶

BAC can be measured by breath, blood or urine tests. Breathalyzers are the primary method used by law enforcement agencies.



- Significant impairment of all mental and physical functions with deficits in judgment
- Feeling as if one is in a stupor
- Blackouts (drug induced amnesia)
- Higher risk of accidental injury to self and others
- Significant loss of control over behavior

- Confusion
- Difficulty standing upright
- Movement requires assistance from others
- Physical harm to self often goes unnoticed or is ignored
- Vomiting may occur or gag reflex is affected with increased risk of asphyxiation from choking on vomit

- In a trance-like state
- Unconsciousness (passed out)
- Difficulty in becoming aroused
- ▶ This is equivalent to the level of surgical anesthesia

- Comatose
- ▶ Extremely high likelihood of death due to respiratory or cardiac failure

### **DANGER ZONE!** **0.06% - 0.40% BAC**

When BAC is within this zone, the depressant effects of alcohol are experienced, increasing your risk of negative outcomes.

# HOW CAN I ESTIMATE MY BAC LEVEL?

To estimate what your BAC would be after a certain number of drinks, use the table below that is specific to your gender. Find your approximate weight on the chart for a better estimate. Keep in mind that each box represents a **standard size drink**.



## APPROXIMATE BAC FOR MEN

Your Weight in Pounds	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240	260	280
1 drink	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02	.02	.02	.01	.01
2 drinks	.08	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04	.03	.03	.02	.02
3 drinks	.11	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04
4 drinks	.15	.12	.11	.09	.08	.08	.07	.06	.06	.05
5 drinks	.19	.16	.13	.12	.11	.09	.09	.08	.08	.07
6 drinks	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09	.09	.09
7 drinks	.26	.22	.19	.16	.15	.13	.12	.11	.11	.10
8 drinks	.30	.25	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.13	.13	.12
9 drinks	.34	.28	.24	.21	.19	.17	.15	.14	.15	.14
10 drinks	.38	.31	.27	.23	.21	.19	.17	.16	.16	.15



### FOR EXAMPLE:

If a man weighing 140 pounds has three standard size drinks, his BAC will equal approximately .08 percent



# HOW CAN I ESTIMATE MY BAC LEVEL?

Gender is one of the many factors that impacts BAC levels. Alcohol affects men and women differently. Virginia sets the legal limit for driving while intoxicated at a BAC of .08 percent for those 21 years of age and older.



## APPROXIMATE BAC FOR **WOMEN**

Your Weight in Pounds	90	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240
1 drink	.05	.05	.04	.03	.03	.03	.02	.02	.02
2 drinks	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.05	.05	.04	.04
3 drinks	.15	.14	.11	.10	.09	.08	.07	.06	.06
4 drinks	.20	.18	.15	.13	.11	.10	.09	.08	.08
5 drinks	.25	.23	.19	.16	.14	.13	.11	.10	.09
6 drinks	.30	.27	.23	.19	.17	.15	.14	.12	.11
7 drinks	.35	.32	.27	.23	.20	.18	.16	.14	.13
8 drinks	.40	.36	.30	.26	.23	.20	.18	.17	.15
9 drinks	.45	.41	.34	.29	.26	.23	.20	.19	.17
10 drinks	.51	.45	.38	.32	.28	.25	.23	.21	.19



### FOR **EXAMPLE:**

If a woman weighing 120 pounds has four standard size drinks, her BAC will equal approximately .15 percent. Driving at this BAC level is illegal. This scenario is also an example of binge drinking.

# HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO ELIMINATE ALCOHOL FROM MY BODY?

Use the tables below to calculate the approximate time that it takes to eliminate the alcohol content of one or more drinks by selecting your gender and approximate weight in pounds.



## HOURS TO ZERO BAC FOR MEN

Your Weight in Pounds	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240
1 drink	2.5	2	2	2	1.5	1	1	1
2 drinks	5	4	3.5	3	3	2.5	2	2
3 drinks	7	6	5	4.4	4	3.5	3.5	3
4 drinks	9.5	8	7	6	5.5	5	4.5	4
5 drinks	12	10	8.5	7.5	6.5	6	5.5	5
6 drinks	14	12	10	9	8	7	6.5	6
7 drinks	17	14	12	10.5	9	8	8	7
8 drinks	19	16	13.5	12	10	9	9	8
9 drinks	21.5	18	15	13.5	11.5	10.5	10	9
10 drinks	23	19	16	14	12.5	11	11	9.5

### FOR EXAMPLE:

If a 180-pound man has four standard size drinks, which equal a BAC of approximately .08 percent, it will take approximately five and a half hours for his BAC level to return to zero. It is dangerous and illegal for him to drive during that time as Virginia defines the legal limit for driving while intoxicated at a BAC of .08 percent for those 21 years of age and older.

# HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO ELIMINATE ALCOHOL FROM MY BODY?

Sobering up quickly by taking a cold shower, exercising, eating a large meal or drinking coffee is a myth! In fact, you can only reduce the amount of alcohol in your bloodstream as time passes.



## HOURS TO ZERO BAC FOR **WOMEN**

Your Weight in Pounds	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240
1 drink	3	2.5	2	2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1
2 drinks	6	5	4	3.5	3	3	2.5	1.5
3 drinks	9	7	6.5	5.5	5	4.5	5	3.5
4 drinks	12	9.5	8.5	7	7	5.5	5	4.5
5 drinks	14.2	12	10.5	9	8	7	6.5	6
6 drinks	17.5	14	12.5	11	9.5	8.5	7.5	7
7 drinks	20	17	14.5	12.5	11.5	10	9	8
8 drinks	23	19	16.5	14.5	13	11.5	10.5	9.5
9 drinks	26	21.5	18.5	16	14.5	13	11.5	10.5
10 drinks	28	26	20	17.5	16	14	12.5	11

### FOR **EXAMPLE:**

If a 120-pound woman has four standard size drinks, which equal a BAC of approximately .15 percent, it will take approximately nine and a half hours for her BAC level to return to zero. It is dangerous and illegal for her to drive during that time.

# WHAT IS BINGE DRINKING?

Binge drinking is the overconsumption of alcohol and is defined as when a woman consumes four or more drinks or when a man consumes five or more drinks in a short period of time. When a large amount of alcohol is consumed in a short period of time, it can result in a dangerously high BAC, leading to alcohol poisoning.



Participating in drinking games can easily result in binge drinking without someone realizing it. The rapid consumption of alcohol during drinking games or while chugging drinks and taking shots can rapidly increase a person's BAC. It can become difficult to keep track of how many standard drinks are being consumed, putting them at a higher risk of alcohol poisoning and other health-related risks.

## WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS OF BINGE DRINKING?



- ▶ ALCOHOL POISONING
- ▶ EXPERIENCING A BLACKOUT
- ▶ BRAIN DAMAGE
- ▶ PHYSICAL INJURY
- ▶ INCREASED RISK OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

# ALCOHOL POISONING

Binge drinking increases the likelihood of a drinker to experience alcohol poisoning. A large volume of alcohol in the bloodstream causes the body and its major functioning organs like the brain to consequently shut down. Even if a person survives alcohol poisoning, it can cause major damage to their brain. Vomiting is typically, but not always, the first sign of alcohol poisoning as the body is trying to eliminate a toxin. Without timely medical attention, a person's condition could worsen, causing the heart to stop beating and breathing to cease.



If a person recognizes that someone has any symptoms, they should call 911 immediately and roll them on their side as they wait for the ambulance to arrive. This will help to decrease the risk of the incapacitated individual choking on their vomit.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ALCOHOL POISONING:



### TAKE ACTION

- **ROLL THEM ON THEIR SIDE**
- **CALL 911**
- **DON'T LEAVE THEM ALONE**
- **BEGIN CPR IF HEART RATE STOPS**

# THE BIPHASIC EFFECT OF ALCOHOL

▶ Although alcohol is a depressant, it can have euphoric effects when consumed in moderation. The stimulant effects of alcohol begin before or during the first drink, but diminish as BAC continues to increase.

## EUPHORIA



Alcohol works as a **stimulant** in this phase.

### WARNING ZONE 0.00% - 0.06% BAC

When BAC is within this zone, the euphoric effects of alcohol are experienced, causing a release of dopamine from the brain.

During the first drink, alcohol begins to work as a stimulant, causing the brain to release dopamine which is a “feel good” excitatory neurotransmitter. Alcohol depresses the inhibitory processes in the brain resulting in a feeling of euphoria.

## DYSPHORIA



Alcohol works as a **depressant** in this phase.

As drinking continues and the BAC rises, the depressant affects of alcohol kick in as the brain begins to release the gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) neurotransmitter that inhibits brain activity. At this stage, responsiveness, coordination and judgement are severely impaired and the individual is at a higher risk for experiencing negative outcomes.

### DANGER ZONE! 0.06% - 0.40% BAC

When BAC is within this zone, the depressant effects of alcohol are experienced, increasing your risk of negative outcomes.

A high alcohol tolerance may decrease one's ability to experience the **stimulant effects of alcohol**.

# ALCOHOL TOLERANCE

- ▶ Alcohol tolerance is defined as the reduction in the stimulant effects of alcohol after a period of prolonged or heavy use.

A person with a high tolerance must consume more alcohol in order to experience the same effects.



## TYPES OF ALCOHOL TOLERANCE



### GENETIC TOLERANCE

Genetics can affect a person's response to alcohol, placing them at a higher risk of alcoholism.



### ENVIRONMENTAL TOLERANCE

Tolerance to alcohol can increase if alcohol is consumed in the same setting or with the same cues. This can be dangerous if the same amount of alcohol consumed in the usual environmental setting is consumed in a new setting, producing different effects.



### METABOLIC TOLERANCE

After a prolonged period of heavy use, the liver will begin to increase the number of enzymes it activates to metabolize alcohol. This reduces the time that alcohol is active in the body and the duration of its effects.



### FUNCTIONAL TOLERANCE

Tolerance can develop when the brain attempts to adapt to compensate for the disruption caused by alcohol in both behavior and bodily functions.

# DID YOU KNOW?

**Alcohol can cause dehydration.** Consuming alcohol decreases the body's production of the anti-diuretic hormone, which helps the body to retain water. While drinking, you may experience increased urination and excessive sweating, depending on your weight. Alcohol poisoning can also cause dehydration as your body eliminates fluids through vomiting. Alternating between alcoholic beverages and water can help to prevent dehydration.

**Alcohol can cause weight gain.** When alcohol is in your system, it is harder for your body to burn fat as it will burn the acetate in alcohol first. It increases the likelihood that your body will store fat from any other calories you've consumed that day. You're also more likely to consume more calories while drinking as alcohol stimulates the appetite. Being mindful of your daily food intake and drinking alcohol in moderation will decrease the risk of gaining weight.

**Alcohol can lower blood sugar levels** as consumption causes an increase in insulin secretion. Low blood sugar can be especially dangerous for diabetics and can cause lightheadedness and fatigue.

**Alcohol can disturb your sleep patterns.** Although drinking alcohol can help you fall asleep faster, you spend less time in the deep, Rapid Eye Movement (REM) stage, affecting the quality and duration of sleep.



# DID YOU KNOW?

**Alcohol can bloat your belly and face.** Different drinks can contain hidden calories loaded with sugar and carbohydrates. Your muscles store carbohydrates for energy, causing your body to retain more water.

**Alcohol can increase stress and anxiety.** While some may drink alcohol to decrease stress or anxiety, drinking in excess and crossing over into the BAC danger zone will worsen these feelings. Becoming dependent on alcohol to relieve stress and anxiety can increase the risk of developing an alcohol use disorder and other negative health outcomes.

Drinking in **moderation** can minimize your risk for experiencing these effects.

## LOW-RISK DRINKING LIMITS

▶ For **men**, no more than four standard drinks in a day or 14 drinks per week.



▶ For **women**, no more than three standard drinks in a day or 7 drinks per week.



# HOW TO BE AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER

A bystander is a person who witnesses a conflict or incident but does nothing to stop the situation or help the person in trouble. An active and empowered bystander takes action when they witness a person in need. Rather than stepping aside and doing nothing, an active bystander intervenes with the goal of helping the other person.

Before a risky situation occurs, there are clues that something may be getting out of hand. Intervening before imminent harm can reduce the likelihood of violence. Warning signs can include excessive drinking, verbal arguments and body language signaling that someone is uncomfortable.



## FIVE STEPS TO BEING AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER:

- 1 Notice the event.
- 2 Determine whether the event is a problem or an emergency and how you can safely respond.
- 3 Assume responsibility.
- 4 Come up with a plan.
- 5 Take action to protect yourself and others.

The **Step UP! Program** provides tips and intervention styles for emergency and non-emergency situations on their website at [www.stepupprogram.org](http://www.stepupprogram.org).



# METHODS OF BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

## THE THREE D'S OF BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

### DIRECT

**Directly intervene in the moment to prevent a problem from occurring.**

- ▶ Asking someone who looks uncomfortable in a situation, “Are you doing okay?”
- ▶ Asking a peer who is alone and highly intoxicated if they have a plan for getting home.
- ▶ Noticing a friend has had three shots of liquor in the past hour and asking them if they think it might be a good idea to slow down so they won’t feel sick later in the evening.

### DELEGATE

**Seek assistance from someone else, whether a peer or police officer.**

- ▶ If you feel uncomfortable acting alone, don’t hesitate to ask a friend or a peer to help you out.
- ▶ If you think the situation may be too risky for you to intervene, try seeking out a campus faculty or staff member. If you are out at a bar, ask a bartender, bouncer or police officer.

### DISTRACT

**Interrupt the situation without directly confronting the harmful behavior.**

- ▶ If it appears that someone is taking advantage of a person who has clearly had too much to drink at a party, distract the offender by interrupting the situation. Even if you don’t know the person, interject by saying “Hey, I was looking for you!” Be creative!

No matter what method is chosen, intervening early and often can help create a **safe and respectful environment.**

# IS SOMEONE YOU KNOW AT RISK OF AN ALCOHOL USE DISORDER



## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK SOMEONE HAS A PROBLEM WITH ALCOHOL?

- ▶ Speak with them individually and in a private setting.
- ▶ Identify the specific behavior you've observed and why it concerns you.
- ▶ Express empathy and avoid an argument by being understanding and not casting judgement.
- ▶ Encourage them to schedule an appointment with a counselor or health services.
- ▶ Remain positive and leave the conversation on good terms no matter the outcome of the conversation.
- ▶ Make an effort to acknowledge any improvements you may observe in their behavior.

An alcohol use disorder (AUD), or alcoholism, is when drinking starts to become a problem to the individual and those around them. If you recognize that someone displays any symptoms of an AUD, talk to them and refer them to seek help.

**If they answer yes to one or more of the following questions, you should refer them to the appropriate medical professional.**

In the past year, have you:

- Found that drinking — or being sick from drinking — caused school problems?
- More than once gotten into situations while/after drinking that increased your chances of getting hurt (such as driving, walking in a dangerous area, or having unsafe sex)?
- Continued to drink even though it was making you feel depressed or anxious or adding to another health problem? Or after having had a memory blackout?
- Had to drink much more than you once did to get the effect you want? Or found that your usual number of drinks had much less effect than before?

# TIPS FOR RESPONSIBLE DRINKING



Keep track of how much you drink and know the affects of different levels of BAC.



Know what a standard drink size is so that you can accurately count your drinks and stay in the “positive” zone.



Pace yourself and don’t consume more than one standard drink every hour. Participating in drinking games will increase your risk for alcohol poisoning.



Don’t drink on an empty stomach. Alternate between a non-alcoholic beverage, water and food and eat foods high in protein before, during and after drinking.



Engage in healthy activities that don’t include drinking alcohol. Don’t rely on alcohol to make a social situation more comfortable or fun. Focus on having as much fun without drinking as you do when you are!



Be aware of urges to drink. Don’t use having a good or bad day as an excuse for drinking excessively.



Know how to say “no” when you are offered a drink but don’t want one.



Be responsible for yourself and those around you. Lock up your alcohol and don’t provide it to individuals younger than 21.



Never drink and drive!



Understand the signs of alcohol poisoning and immediately call 911 if anyone displays any symptoms.



Remember the 3 D’s of Bystander intervention: Direct, Delegate and Distract.



Limit weekly consumption to avoid developing a high tolerance for alcohol.

# RESOURCES

## **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov))**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) promotes and implements prevention strategies to reduce the impact of mental and substance use disorders in America's communities.

## **The Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility ([www.responsibility.org](http://www.responsibility.org))**

The Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility (Responsibility.org) leads the fight to eliminate drunk driving and underage drinking and promotes responsible decision-making regarding alcoholic beverages.

## **Step UP! ([www.stepupprogram.org](http://www.stepupprogram.org))**

Step UP! is a prosocial behavior and bystander intervention program that educates students to be proactive in helping others.

## **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism ([www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov))**

NIAAA supports and conducts research on the impact of alcohol use on human health and well-being. It is the largest funder of alcohol research in the world.

## **Virginia ABC Education and Prevention Resources**

The Virginia ABC Education and Prevention Section provides programming and resources for all age groups. Please call or visit us online for more information.

**Phone:** 804-977-7440

**E-mail:** [education@abc.virginia.gov](mailto:education@abc.virginia.gov)

**Web:** [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov)

**Facebook:** [Facebook.com/VirginiaABCEducationAndPrevention](https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaABCEducationAndPrevention)

## **Miss Virginia School Tour**

In partnership with Virginia ABC, Miss Virginia travels across Virginia to elementary schools spreading a message of health, wellness and prevention with students and teachers.

## **Being Outstanding Leaders Together (BOLT) Against Drugs and Alcohol**

Provides drug and alcohol prevention knowledge to middle school students through regional community collaboration and high school peer leadership.

## **Project Sticker Shock**

Supplies are provided to community groups in an effort to decrease social providing. The project includes stickers being placed on alcohol packaging reminding buyers to not provide to minors and is done in conjunction with a press event to help raise awareness.

## **Youth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Project (YADAPP)**

A high school youth-led leadership conference equipping teens with a strategic plan and empowering them to keep their schools and communities alcohol and drug free.

## **Higher Education Alcohol and Drug Strategic Unified Prevention (HEADS UP)**

Strengthening and supporting the mission of healthy and safe campus-communities through strategic initiatives, resources and capacity building.

## **Responsible Sellers & Servers: Virginia's Program (RSVP)**

### **Managers' Alcohol Responsibility Training (MART)**

Two courses are offered to help licensees become more responsible and to better understand Virginia laws, rules and regulations. Both courses are available online and in classroom settings, instructed by a team of Virginia ABC special agents in your region.

## **Alcohol and Aging Awareness Group (AAAG)**

A statewide affiliate group that provides education, training and resources to prevent the misuse of alcohol and medications as adults age.

## **Virginia Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (VOSAP)**

An organization that promotes collaboration among state and local agencies, organizations, coalitions and faith communities that address substance abuse prevention.

## **Educational Materials**

Brochures, posters, training DVDs and public service announcements are available to the general public at no cost.

## **Grant Program**

Alcohol education and prevention grants assist community partners to develop and enhance initiatives related to alcohol education and prevention. Grant cycle is July through June with applications due in the spring.



***VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL***

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