

# the **RED CUP** Q&A



**separating alcohol fact from fiction**  
EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

## **Q** What is the best cure for a hangover?

**A.** There is no shortage of opinion on what makes the best cure for a hangover. Depending on who you ask, you may hear things as varied as having a big, greasy breakfast, eating menudo, or even taking another drink. But the low down on hangovers is this: try all the “cures” you like, but the only proven way to avoid them is to prevent them in the first place. It hardly sounds exotic, but drinking plenty of water while you drink and limiting the number of drinks you have are the only surefire remedies.

Because alcohol is a diuretic – a type of drug that increases the rate of urination – drinking leads to dehydration. The more you drink, the more you will experience dehydration’s ill effects the next day, such as headache, dry mouth and fatigue. In fact, drinking alcohol in combination with caffeine (e.g rum and Coke) may even lead to more severe hangovers since caffeine has a similar dehydrating effect. In addition to water, sports drinks – which have the added benefit of glucose (sugar) and electrolytes (salts and other minerals) – can also help. Try having water, a sports drink or another non-alcoholic beverage for every standard drink of alcohol that you consume.

And what about those hangover-cure pills you may have heard about? Most of them instruct you to wash down their products with generous amounts of water. So chances are, if you didn’t experience a hangover after taking these, it was probably the water and not the pills that made the difference.

One thing you will want to avoid after a night of drinking is acetaminophen (such as Tylenol), since the combination of alcohol and acetaminophen can cause serious liver damage. Other options to ease your discomfort such as aspirin or ibuprofen may seem like a good idea, but these products can lead to stomach irritation when your stomach is already in a delicate state due to alcohol (also an irritant).

Looking for more alcohol info you can use? Campus Health has a range of programs for groups as well individuals. Call 621-5700 for more information.



### **wildfact**

**51% of UA students alternate alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic beverages.**  
(2009 Health & Wellness Survey, N=1,720)

### **Got a question about alcohol?**

Email it to [redcup@email.arizona.edu](mailto:redcup@email.arizona.edu) and have a chance to win a **\$100 Best Buy gift card** during the Spring 2010 semester.



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