the RED CUP Q&A

separating alcohol fact from fiction

EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

Q Is it possible to maintain a .05% BAC for an extended period of time?

A. Yes, and kudos to you for wanting to maintain that "sweet spot" where any positives from drinking are less likely to be replaced by the negative effects of over consumption.

Most college students can identify benefits from drinking alcohol, such as it may loosen you up, feels good, increases confidence, and is fun and social. Equally identifiable are negative consequences, like hangovers, regrets, alcohol poisoning, poor decisions, fighting, MIPs, drama, and even death. What most students don't realize is that if you maintain a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) between .04-.06%, then the likelihood of experiencing the pros of drinking occur without the cons.

So, how does one calculate that particular "sweet-spot" algorithm? Well, you have to know what determines your BAC. Your BAC is dependent upon your sex, weight, the amount you consume, and the time period spent drinking. You also need to know what defines a "standard drink" so you can track the amount you drink.

1 DRINK =
12 oz. beer
4-5 oz. wine
1 oz. liquor

To maintain a BAC of .05% over multiple hours requires a clear ability to pace the exact number of drinks you can consume.

For example, a 120 lb. woman can drink two standard drinks in two hours and have a BAC of .05%. However, if she plans on drinking five hours, to maintain that same BAC of .05%, she can only drink a total of 3.5 standard drinks.

A 160 lb. man can drink three standard drinks in two hours and get a BAC of .05%. However, if he plans on drinking five hours and maintaining that same BAC of .05%, he can only drink a total of 5.5 drinks.

Still too complicated? We've got you covered. Free "Safer" drinking cards for both sexes are available in Health Promotion, located on the 3rd floor of the Campus Health Service. Nothing could be easier than to have "paper brains" right there in your back pocket, wallet, or purse.

ARIZONA

wildfact Drinking during the summer increases the risk of dehydration.

Got a question about alcohol?

Email it to redcup@email.arizona.edu

CAMPUS HEALTH SERVICE
www.health.arizona.edu

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