

# the RED CUP Q&A



separating alcohol fact from fiction  
EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

## Q What is a hangover?

**A.** Simply put, a hangover is what happens the morning after you drank too much. Although a hangover can occur any time after consuming too much alcohol, most drinkers drink at night and experience hangover side effects the next morning. Hangover symptoms leave you feeling sick with some combination of headache, dizziness, fuzzy-headedness, sleepiness, low energy, thirst, and cotton mouth. You will likely be averse to light and noise as well. All of this can make you irritable. The more alcohol consumed, the worse the hangover symptoms and the longer they last. Typical symptoms can last an hour or two up to an entire day as the alcohol slo-o-o-o-wly seeps out of your body.

Most of the hangover symptoms are a result of dehydration that occurs as a result of alcohol's diuretic effect in the body. A diuretic (soda, coffee, alcohol) directs the body's water to the bladder for release, thus the reason drinkers need to make frequent trips to the restroom. The result is that you will feel dehydrated the next morning.

**How to deal with a hangover?** There's not a magic pill even though the drugstore shelves promise there is. Hangovers eventually end with rest, drinking plenty of water, and waiting it out. You may have heard the "hair of the dog" remedy which is to drink more alcohol, but it's never a good idea. Prevention is the best solution here, so know how much you can safely drink by checking out the Safer Drink Level Guidelines at the UA Campus Health site, [campushealthmedia.arizona.edu](http://campushealthmedia.arizona.edu). These guidelines for males and females inform a drinker how much they can consume based on their weight and amount of time spent drinking in order to remain at a safe BAC.

So enjoy the first week of school, otherwise known as "syllabus week," knowing that you don't have to experience a hangover.



wildfact

**58% of UA students usually have 0-4 drinks when they party.** (2013 Health & Wellness Survey, n=3,055)



Got a question about alcohol?

Email it to [redcup@email.arizona.edu](mailto:redcup@email.arizona.edu)



[www.health.arizona.edu](http://www.health.arizona.edu)

The Red Cup Q&A is written by Lynn Reyes, LCSW, LSAC, David Salafsky, MPH, Lee Ann Hamilton, MA, CHES, and Spencer Gorin, RN, in the Health Promotion and Preventive Services (HPPS) department of the UA Campus Health Service.