

the

# RED CUP Q&A



separating alcohol fact from fiction  
EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

## Q Why do girls look better to me when I'm drinking?

**A.** Some people call this effect “beer goggles” and there are more than a few reasons why alcohol makes people look better to you. Alcohol changes your brain chemistry, body functions, and behaviors in ways that researchers continue to study. Here are just four ways that alcohol affects you:

- 1. Decreased inhibitions** - For many people, alcohol serves as a “social lubricant,” making it easier to talk, dance, or hook up with a potential sexual partner – whether you are shy and introverted or a wild and crazy partier. You may find it's easier to approach and talk to someone with some “liquid courage” fueling you.
- 2. Decreased vision** - Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant and you simply don't see as well when you are intoxicated. Depending on the amount you drink, alcohol can affect your vision in the following ways: blurriness, double vision, decreased night vision, and impaired peripheral vision. Simply put, what you think you see isn't always the reality.
- 3. Expectations** - Your mindset can have a powerful influence on your moods and behavior. Research has shown that if you expect alcohol to make you feel better (or other people look better)... guess what? It can do just that! Drinking may make you feel better – at least when you begin drinking and your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is in the low to moderate range (< .05 BAC) after one or two drinks. Heavy alcohol consumption often cancels out any benefits of a positive mindset.
- 4. Increased serotonin levels** - Serotonin is a neurotransmitter associated with sleep, appetite, and pleasure (among other sensory behaviors). Alcohol consumption can temporarily increase serotonin levels. High serotonin levels can make a person feel good. When you feel good, other people may look good, too! Brain chemistry is very complex and alcohol is just one of many factors that can raise serotonin activity. Exercise, sleep, and certain foods can also increase serotonin levels and feelings of pleasure.

**FYI** - You can avoid wearing beer goggles when you chose to drink moderately: one or two standard drinks per hour (or less).



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**UA Stressbusters are offering FREE 5-minute back rubs on the UA Mall Wednesday, October 23rd from 11am-1pm.**



**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, LISAC, 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.