

the **RED CUP** Q&A



separating alcohol fact from fiction
EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

Q Why is it that some nights I can drink a lot of alcohol and be okay and other nights, I have a few and I get sick?

A. There are a few things that might explain what you've experienced. Our best guess for the biggest factor among them? Time. Chances are, if you felt OK and avoided getting sick on the nights you happened to drink more, you probably did a good job of spacing those drinks out over a longer period of time. While theories on alcohol abound, the thing that gets most people sick is simply too much alcohol, too fast.

What you're drinking can also make a difference. Even though a standard shot of hard alcohol (around 1 oz. of 40% alcohol) is roughly equivalent to 12 oz. of 4% beer, the difference is the time it takes to drink them. Because shots go down quickly and hit your system that much faster, it's easy to overindulge. By contrast, enjoying a beer or mixed drink takes more time and allows you to pace your consumption.

Last but not least, whether you drink on an empty or full stomach can also affect how you feel and how rapidly your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) rises, since food in your stomach slows the absorption of alcohol into your bloodstream. As a result, having a meal before a night out is a good way to keep your social buzz longer. On the other hand, drinking on empty can cause your BAC to spike, which usually results in drinking more along the way. And it's no surprise that those higher BACs tend to be accompanied by things like throwing up, blacking out, run-ins with law enforcement, and an assortment of other not-so-fun experiences.

The good news is that by drinking less, spacing out your drinks, dodging the hard stuff, and eating food before you party, you can avoid the less enjoyable aspects of alcohol in the first place.



wildfact

Pennsylvania-based D.G. Yuengling & Son, commonly called Yuengling (pronounced "ying-ling") is the oldest operating brewing company in the United States. It was established in 1829.



Got a question about alcohol?

Email it to redcup@email.arizona.edu



www.health.arizona.edu

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