

the RED CUP Q&A



separating alcohol fact from fiction
EVERY TUESDAY IN THE DAILY WILDCAT

Q Why does alcohol cause erectile dysfunction? And how does it affect women during sex?

A. Alcohol has many different effects on the body (both positive and negative), depending on how much is consumed. While a drink or two may relax you, make a potential partner seem more desirable, reduce inhibitions, or get you “in the mood,” too much alcohol can have negative effects on your sexual performance. And here’s a short list of reasons why:

- 1. Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant.** It inhibits the reflexes, sensations, circulation, and complex physiological processes that need to happen during sexual arousal and orgasm. Simply put, alcohol works against your body’s attempt to have an erection. Women may need more time and more stimulation in order to make it to orgasm after drinking heavily.
- 2. Alcohol dilates and expands blood vessels.** While this is good for getting blood flowing into the penis (causing it to harden), it also allows blood to flow back “out” of the penis, making an erection difficult to maintain.
- 3. Alcohol is a diuretic.** It causes you to eliminate water, leaving your tissues dehydrated and your blood volume lower. While dehydration may not stop an erection – it isn’t going to help either. In women, dehydration can cause vaginal dryness. Ouch! Other symptoms of dehydration are weakness, confusion, headaches, and more. Our bodies just don’t function well when we are too “dry.”

William Shakespeare wrote a simple truth about alcohol in Macbeth back in 1623: “It provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance.” The Bard was a wise man.

The trick is to find your “sweet spot” – the point at which you drink a sensible amount to enjoy the positive benefits of alcohol while dodging the downfalls of too much booze.

wildfact

You’ll love Food Day! Free stuff, great ideas! Wednesday, October 22nd from 10am-2pm on the UA Mall.



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Got a question about alcohol? Email it to redcup@email.arizona.edu

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