

the **RED CUP** Q&A

separating alcohol fact from fiction

wildfact

96% of UA students have not used cocaine in the past 30 days. (2015 Health & Wellness Survey, n=2,705)

Is it true that cocaine sobers you up?

No. The only way to “sober up” is by allowing your liver to eliminate alcohol from your bloodstream over time. You will not sober up by taking a shower, drinking coffee, or eating food, and certainly not by using cocaine.

Cocaine, also known as coke, snow, white girl, or blow, is a central nervous system stimulant that produces a “high” feeling of euphoria, along with an increase in energy and talkativeness. However, these effects are very short-lived. Increasing the dose of cocaine may intensify the high briefly, but can also lead to bizarre, erratic, and violent behavior. Cocaine also causes an increase in body temperature, heart rate, and blood pressure, which is dangerous for your central nervous system. Some cocaine users also report feelings of restlessness, irritability, anxiety, panic, and paranoia.

Experiencing all of those side effects on top of being intoxicated is very dangerous. When mixing cocaine and alcohol, you may initially think you are more alert and energized, but you are still intoxicated. This combination will cause a dramatic increase in heart rate, which could lead to a heart attack or stroke, and cause sudden death. Combining cocaine and alcohol is more toxic to the brain than either substance alone.

So, how long will it take for you to “sober up”? It depends on how much you drink, how much you weigh, and the speed at which your liver enzymes metabolize alcohol. To stay safe, monitor your drinking, stay within your “sweet spot” (BAC of .05 or less) and stop drinking at a reasonable hour, especially if you have class or work the next day.

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



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