

# the **RED CUP** Q&A

## separating alcohol fact from fiction

### wildfact

Dehydration, lack of sleep/fatigue, and alcohol withdrawal can also lead to hangovers.

## How is plastic bottle or cheap alcohol different than expensive alcohol? Do they cause worse hangovers?

Not all plastic bottles are bad, although they tend to be the less expensive bottles when it comes to liquor, and there's a reason for that. One difference between cheaper alcohol and more expensive alcohol is congeners. Congeners are a byproduct of the fermentation process that flavor and color liquors. The more an alcohol is distilled, the more impurities and congeners are removed. Also, dark liquors like bourbon, whiskey, and wine have more congeners than clear liquors such as rum, vodka, gin, etc.

Expensive alcohol may go through the distilling process 6 or more times, compared to cheaper alcohols that may only be distilled twice – leaving behind more congeners. There hasn't been a lot of research on the direct correlation between alcohol and congeners,

but we do know that it takes a fewer number of drinks to produce a hangover for a high congener beverage (less expensive) than it does for a low congener beverage (more expensive).

Research suggests you may be less likely to binge drink with a bottle of expensive alcohol because it costs more, compared to a bottle of cheaper alcohol. When drinking cheaper alcohol, you may drink more of it in a shorter amount of time, leading to overconsumption. This can easily lead to nausea, vomiting, hangovers, or even alcohol poisoning. Drinking too much, too fast, is never a good idea.

To drink safer and avoid hangovers, set a limit before you start drinking, alternate with non-alcoholic beverages, drink water, avoid drinking games, and pace yourself.

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)



## CAMPUS HEALTH

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