

the facts...



90% of UA students believe they should not drink to a level that interferes with academics or other responsibilities.

 **CAMPUS HEALTH SERVICE**
www.health.arizona.edu

▶ we got the facts from you.

Health & Wellness Survey 2006 (3,102 respondents) administered to a random sample of undergraduate classes at the UA.

sextalk.

answers to your questions about sex and relationships

factoid 98% of students prefer to be with someone who drinks moderately or not at all. (2006 Health and Wellness Survey, n= 3102)

Q. I am a 22-year old female here at the UofA. Over the last couple of years, I have noticed something about my body and alcohol that I don't think is very common. Whenever I go out drinking, the last thing on my mind that evening is sex. However, the next day, as soon as I wake up, I have an overwhelming sexual desire and am basically horny all day. Is there any reason why my sexual urges are so strong the day after drinking?

A. In most cases alcohol will decrease libido or sex drive, even while it lowers inhibitions. That being said, everyone responds a little differently to alcohol, and that also includes the hormones that alcohol affects.

Testosterone is one such hormone that is linked to increased libido in both women and men. Most of the time testosterone decreases with the introduction of alcohol in the body, but recent research has shown that some individuals experience the opposite effect, which could help explain the boost in your arousal.

Understanding why you don't feel "horny" the night before could be due to a host of factors. As you mention, sex is the last thing on your mind, and that association alone may be enough to set your expectations for the evening. Chances are, being back home after a night out with friends, you may be more comfortable attending to these feelings.

Hormones aside, alcohol is also a depressant that more often than not will further hinder sex. In men these sedative effects make it difficult to establish and maintain erections, and in women the diuretic properties of alcohol can lead to vaginal dryness. Of the inherent paradox between drink and sex, Shakespeare wrote that alcohol "provokes the desire, but takes away the performance." In Elizabethan England, squelching inhibition no doubt came first and foremost when it came to carnal desires.

On a final note, thanks for pointing out that keeping sex and alcohol separate is always a good option. Sober sex reduces the risk of STD's, unintended pregnancy, regrets, and yes, bad sex.

Have a question? Send it to sextalk@email.arizona.edu

SexTalk is written by Lee Ann Hamilton, M.A., CHES, David Salafsky, MPH & Laurie Krupski, PhD, health educators at The University of Arizona Campus Health Service.

 **CAMPUS HEALTH SERVICE**