

Alcohol Poisoning

Alcohol intoxication occurs in three steps

1. Alcohol is absorbed directly into the blood stream through the stomach.
2. Alcohol is transported in the blood-stream to all organs in the body
3. Alcohol is detoxified, (broken down) into a non-harmful substance in the liver. This occurs at a rate of ½ ounce per hour.

REMEMBER.....

Blood circulates through the body in 90 seconds, so effects of alcohol may be felt in as little as 90 seconds. Nothing will speed up the rate of alcohol detoxification. It is a function of time.

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- Different people experience different effects of alcohol. *There are no absolutes.*
- If a large amount of alcohol is in a person's system, it can result in unconsciousness. *The heart and lungs can be slowed to the point of stopping.*
- It is dangerous to assume a person will *just sleep it off*. People may pass out before all of the alcohol reaches the brain.
- *When in doubt, call for emergency assistance.*

Symptoms of Alcohol Poisoning

What should I do?

Do not leave person alone!

Try to wake the person up. Call their name; Shake them; Pinch their skin. If they don't respond, get help.

Turn and keep the person on their side so that if they get sick they will not choke on their vomit. If they do not wake up after vomiting, get help.

Check the person's skin. If his/her skin is pale or bluish or is cold or clammy, get help!

Check person's breathing. If it is irregular, or too slow/shallow (less than 8 breaths per minute or more than 10 seconds between breaths), get help!

If a person has any of these symptoms, he or she is suffering from acute alcohol. **GET HELP!**

Call the Student Health Center to speak to a nurse at 724-738-2052 or the campus police for an ambulance: 724-738-3333 or 911, if off campus.

Always be "better safe than sorry" if you are not sure what to do. How can your friend be angry about you caring for him or her?