Celebrate Responsibly.
Don't Drink
& Drive





Drink safely this holiday season

The holiday season is an enjoyable time of year for a variety of reasons. Individuals get to spend time with friends or family members they may not see very often; gifts are purchased and exchanged; and plenty of delicious foods and beverages are consumed. The holiday season can be an indulgent time of year, but most people cast aside the excess in January as they make and heed annual resolutions.

Alcohol tends to be part of holiday indulgence. From mulled ciders to creamy eggnogs to cranberry-infused cocktails to champagne toasts, there are plenty of spirited ways to raise a glass in good cheer. Alcohol, when enjoyed in moderation, can be part of holiday celebrations. However, people must be mindful to consume alcohol safely and responsibly. Here are some tips to avoid getting tipsy this holiday season.

Understand standard drink sizes

Drinks like beer, wine and distilled spirits contain varying amounts of alcohol. Therefore, the "size" of a drink varies depending on one's beverage of choice. The National Association on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism says a 12-ounce bottle of beer at 5 percent alcohol by volume is one standard drink, as is a five-ounce glass of wine at 12 percent alcohol

by volume. Those who enjoy distilled spirits should recognize that a 1.5-ounce shot glass at 40 percent alcohol by volume is a standard drink. The higher the alcohol volume, the smaller the portion size one should have.

Follow the "1-2-3" rule

The 1-2-3 rule is a guideline for more responsible drinking. Typically it means having no more than one standard drink per hour, no more than two standard drinks per occasion, and no more than three standard drinks per day. This will help the body to process alcohol safely and prevent binge drinking.

Consider the "20-minute" rule

Another guideline for reducing alcohol consumption is to pause for 20 minutes after finishing a drink before having another. This allows time to decide if a second drink is truly desired. This strategy, although not scientific in nature nor based on any general guidance on safe moderate drinking recommendations by health experts, simply is a way to drink less by slowing down consumption.

Eat food prior to drinking

Johns Hopkins University notes eating before

drinking slows the rate at which alcohol reaches the small intestine. This helps to taper absorption to a pace that the body can handle more effectively. Eating food while drinking alcohol also increases the rate of alcohol elimination from the bloodstream by 25 to 45 percent. Foods that blend a mix of protein, fat and carbohydrates work best for this purpose.

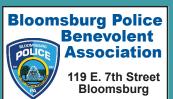
Alternate with water or seltzer

Drinking still or sparkling water between alcoholic beverages gives the body time to process any alcohol being consumed and helps to prevent dehydration (alcohol is a diuretic). An added bonus is that drinking water between alcoholic drinks slows the rate of consumption.

Skip driving

Alcohol affects one's ability to make sound decisions and also impairs reaction times and motor skills. That is why it is essential to have a plan for getting home before consuming alcohol. Taxis, rideshare services and designated drivers are each better means of getting home than driving oneself after consuming alcohol.

Alcohol may play a role in holiday celebrations. Through responsible and safe behavior, the holidays can remain merry. TF25C426



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