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Fall Stall Seat Journal: Edition 1a Design by Cissy Deng, Class of 2015

Drinking Myths

Symptoms of Alcohol Overdose

Remember the acronym “PUBS”:

Puking (while passed out)

Unresponsive to stimulation (pinch or shaking)

Breathing (slow, shallow or no breathing)

Skin (blue, cold or clammy)

If you see any ONE of these signs, call 911 immediately!

The National Poison Control Hotline (1-800-222-1222) provides free, expert, confidential advice every hour, every day of the year.

Myth: Being drunk improves sexual performance.

Fact: Consumption of alcohol may loosen up inhibitions, but excessive drinking can cause impotence in men and decreased vaginal or clitoral sensation in women. Being drunk also makes it difficult to make clear decisions about whether or not to be sexually active or use a condom correctly. Additionally alcohol use can make it impossible to determine if your partner is giving effective consent to sexual activity. Effective consent means words or actions that show a knowing and voluntary agreement to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity.

Myth: The best way to help friends who are very drunk is to give them food.

Fact: Eating food before drinking and alternating alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages are good ways to dilute alcohol and slow absorption into the bloodstream. But forcing a drunk friend to consume food or water can trigger the gag reflex and cause a person to vomit. If they’ve lost muscle control, food could get lodged in the throat can cause choking. Plus, food doesn’t speed up the breakdown of alcohol once it is in the bloodstream.

Myth: A cold shower or exercise will sober someone up.

Fact: Once alcohol is in the bloodstream, nothing speeds up the metabolism of alcohol. These activities can also be dangerous; a cold shower can cause shock and people can hurt themselves or others by exercising drunk.

Myth: “Passing out” isn’t dangerous.

Fact: “Passing out” isn’t a medical term and describes behaviors from falling asleep to being comatose. Alcohol is a depressant which slows down the central nervous system, decreasing breathing and heart rate and lowering blood pressure. When the body’s systems slowdown, involuntary functions, like the gag reflex are impaired. When alcohol causes the brain to start shutting down these vital functions, it is obviously dangerous.

Myth: Two people drinking the same amount of alcohol will feel the same effects.

Fact: A number of factors help determine how intoxicated a person gets while drinking. Height and weight, biological sex, food in the stomach, medications and even sleep make a difference. Alcohol’s effects can vary when you are in new or unfamiliar environments and even when you party with different people.

How to Help a Friend

Because blood alcohol concentration (BAC) can still be rising, a person who has passed out needs to be:

* Monitored in the room continuously by someone sober
* Rolled on his/her side to keep the airway open in case of vomiting or choking.
* Helped when showing symptoms of alcohol poisoning by calling 911 immediately.

Asking for Help – What to Expect

The U.Va. Hospital Emergency Department and Student Health DO NOT notify police or U.Va. officials if a student is seen for an alcohol-related incident. Parents or guardians are only notified in life threatening situations. 911 calls on-Grounds will result in police response to help care for the student and assist medical staff. Someone from the Dean of Students Office will follow-up for safety purposes. Ambulance services are FREE in Charlottesville.

A safe way home

UTS buses: Late-night buses run every 20 minutes from 12 a.m. to 2:30 a.m. Thursday - Saturday.

The Safe Ride van: (434-242-1122) provides transportation home for students. Safe Ride does not transport intoxicated individuals or groups of three or more. Sun-Wed (mid – 7 am) Thurs-Sat (2:30 am – 7 am)

Emergency Ride Program: U.Va. students who have no reliable or safe means of transportation and no money for cab fare can call Yellow Cab at 434-295-4131 and show a valid UVa student ID to the driver to charge the ride to UVa and pay via the student information system—no questions asked.

Hoo Knew?

98% of U.Va. students believe it is their responsibility to call 911 if a friend is showing signs of alcohol overdose.

From the Spring 2013 Health Survey, with responses from 678 UVa students.