

# Blood Alcohol Concentration

...is the amount of alcohol – usually expressed as a percentage – of alcohol in the blood.

**The more alcohol per volume of blood (i.e., the higher your blood alcohol concentration) the more impaired you will become.**

## Factors that may affect your blood alcohol concentration:

- (1) **The amount of alcohol you consume** – the more you consume the higher your BAC.
- (2) **The speed at which you consume alcohol** – the faster you drink the faster your BAC will rise.
- (3) **Your weight** – the more you weigh the more water you have in your body and the greater your blood volume which may dilute or “spread out” the alcohol in blood.
- (4) **Body fat & muscle mass** – muscle absorbs alcohol whereas fatty tissue does not, so a person with greater body fat will have a higher percentage of alcohol in the blood.
- (5) **Your gender** – females who drink the same amount as males in the same amount of time will have a higher BAC because females are generally smaller than males, weigh less than males, and have more body fat than males.
- (6) **Drug use** – prescribed, over-the-counter, or illegal drugs can sometimes speed up the effects of alcohol. NOTE: Females on birth control will tend to have a higher BAC than females with same age, height, and weight who are not on birth control.
- (7) **Food** – the more food in your stomach the slower rate of alcohol absorption.
- (8) **Carbonation** – alcoholic drinks that contain carbonation (e.g., Champaign or drinks with soda or seltzer) will increase the speed at which your BAC will rise.
- (9) **Time** remember that TIME is the only way for alcohol to leave your body – about 1 hour per drink.

## What BAC effects might “feel” like when you are drinking alcoholic beverages.

BAC (Percent)	EFFECTS
.02 -- .04	LIGHT BUZZ - relaxation, sensation of warmth, “buzz,” minor judgment impairment
.05 -- .07	BUZZED – relaxation, euphoria, lowered inhibitions, minor impairment of reasoning and memory, exaggerated emotions, impairment in coordination, increased impairment in judgment
.08 -- .10	LEGALLY IMPAIRED – euphoria, fatigue, more severe impairment in coordination including balance, speech, vision, reaction time, judgment impaired
.11 -- .15	DRUNK – depressive effects of alcohol are more pronounced, gross motor impairment, judgment and perception severely impaired
.16 -- .19	VERY DRUNK – possible nausea and vomiting, increased confusion and disorientation, dizzy, severe motor impairment, judgment and perception severely impaired; might need assistance to walk
.20 -- .24	DAZED & CONFUSED – severe disorientation to time and place, nausea and vomiting likely, likely need assistance to stand and walk
.25 -- .30	STUPOR – all mental, physical, and sensory functions are severely impaired, little comprehension, vomiting very likely, coma possible, death possible
.31 & up!	COMA & DEATH – Coma possible, death due to respiratory arrest is possible.

Click [HERE](#) for an interactive BAC Calculator!