

# ALCOHOL POISONING

The Facts That Everyone Should Know

## What is Alcohol Poisoning?

Alcohol poisoning is a potentially deadly situation that happens when someone drinks more alcohol than their body can handle. This can be either on purpose or by accident. Binge drinking is a big reason for alcohol overdose. It's when a man quickly drinks five or more alcoholic drinks within two hours, or a woman drinks at least four drinks in that same time. An alcohol binge can last a few hours or even several days. It's important to know that someone can drink a deadly amount of alcohol before passing out.



## Know The Signs

- Mental confusion, stupor
- Difficulty remaining conscious, or inability to wake up
- Vomiting
- Seizures
- Slow breathing (fewer than 8 breaths per minute)
- Pale or bluish skin color
- Clammy skin
- Irregular breathing (10 seconds or more between breaths)
- Slow heart rate
- Dulled responses, such as no gag reflex (which prevents choking)
- Extremely low body temperature

## TAKE ACTION

1

### DO NOT WAIT

Call 911 for help immediately. Do not wait for a person to present all the warning signs and don't play doctor - cold showers, hot coffee, and walking do not reverse the effects of alcohol overdose and could do more harm than good.

2

### GATHER INFORMATION

Be prepared to answer these questions from first responders:

- What kind of alcohol was consumed?
- How much was consumed?
- Were any other drugs taken?
- Other health information that you know about the patient
  - Existing health conditions
  - Medications currently prescribed
  - Any known allergies

3

### STAND BY

Do not leave an intoxicated person alone - they are a fall risk. If conscious, keep the person on the ground in a sitting or partially upright position rather than in a chair.

4

### KEEP THEM SAFE

A person who is vomiting has a high risk of choking.

- If conscious - have them lean forward to prevent choking.
- If unconscious - lie them down and roll to one side with an ear toward the ground.