



Alcohol: the whole truth



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Know The Facts - Teacher Answer Key

1. Myth or Fact:

Drinking beer or wine will not make you as drunk as drinking spirits (vodka, rum etc.)

Myth

- Alcohol comes in different forms – beer, wine and spirits but a standard drink contains the same amount of alcohol (13.6 grams)
- So a 12 oz (355 ml) beer = 5 oz (150 ml) glass of wine = 1.5 oz (44 ml) shot will all have the same amount of alcohol in it.
- The difference comes in the amount people drink and sometimes the percentage (i.e. some beers come in different alcohol percentages)

2. Myth or Fact:

Canadians spend about \$12.4 billion dollars a year on alcohol.

Fact (kind of)

- Fact – from the CAMH information form on alcohol.
- But - in 2008 – this number increased and Canadians spent 18 billion on alcohol (CBC - <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/10/10/f-alcohol-numbers.html>)

3. Myth or Fact:

Drinking coffee, working up a sweat, or having a cold shower will NOT sober you up.

Fact

- Right - only time will make you sober.
- Your liver eliminates alcohol at a certain rate and nothing will change that rate. Your liver needs, on average, about 1.5 hours to eliminate one standard drink from your body, but that depends on many factors including body size, gender etc.

4. Myth or Fact:

If a female and a male both have an average body type and weigh the same, and drink the same amount of alcohol, it will have the same effect on each of them.

Myth

- Males have more water in their bodies than females. This means the alcohol gets more diluted in males, and so a male will notice less effect than a female of the same body weight and body type who drank the same amount of alcohol.



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- Males also have more of the thing (enzyme) that breaks alcohol down in the body in order to process the alcohol, therefore males can process/digest the alcohol at a faster rate.

5. Myth or Fact:

Alcohol has no effect on a pregnant mother's unborn baby

Myth

- When a woman drinks alcohol during pregnancy, the alcohol passes directly into the bloodstream of the baby.
- It is poisonous to the baby's growing cells.
- Some of the possible effects of alcohol on the developing baby may be heart problems, other organ problems or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder also behaviour problems, growth deficiencies, developmental disabilities etc.
- The risk of bearing a child with these birth defects increases with the amount of alcohol consumed.
- The first trimester is a time of great importance for the baby, however there is no known time during pregnancy when it is known to be safe to drink alcohol

6. Myth or Fact:

Alcohol can be good for you

Myth

- You may have heard that alcohol is good for the heart. What you may not have heard is that the health benefits of alcohol apply mainly to people over the age of 45 years, and that in most cases, a drink every other day is enough. For young people, there are no known health benefits from drinking alcohol.

7. Myth or Fact:

Alcohol gives you energy

Myth

- Alcohol is a "depressant" drug.
- That means it slows down the parts of your brain that affect your thinking and behaviour, as well as your breathing and heart rate.
- Some youth "feel" like alcohol gives them energy because it is often combined with sugar (fruit juice) and caffeine (i.e. red bull or coke)



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8. Myth or Fact

Beer before liquor, never been sicker - liquor before beer, you're in the clear.

Myth

- This is an old urban legend used to explain why people get sick when they drink - but it's just not true.
- Your blood alcohol content (also known as BAC, the percentage of alcohol in your blood) is what determines how drunk you are. It doesn't matter what type of alcohol you chose to consume - a drink is a drink, and too much of any combination can make you sick.

9. Myth or Fact

Alcohol is the most used drug amongst youth in the Region of Peel

Fact

- Alcohol is most used "illegal" drug by youth in the Region of Peel (because it is illegal for people under the age of 19 to be drinking alcohol).
- Alcohol is the drug of choice for youth (as well as adults)
- Just over 2/3's (68%) of students from grade 7 to grade 12 reported they had ever tried an alcohol drink

10. Myth or Fact

A hangover is the only thing alcohol can do to you

Myth

- A hangover is bad – it includes headache, nausea, diarrhea, shakiness and vomiting – but its not the only thing
- Alcohol can have an effect on the following:
 - o your judgement, attitude and your behaviour which can lead to embarrassment, unwanted risky behaviour, violence, injury etc.
 - o crime, violence or traffic injuries or deaths
 - o alcohol poisoning, which can kill you
 - o effect on your health: high blood pressure and strokes, liver disease, cancers, brain and nerve damage, stomach diseases etc.

11. Myth or Fact

Some people are friendlier when they're drunk

Myth ... sometimes

- Alcohol can affect your judgement, attitude and your behaviour therefore it can bring out different sides of how you might normally act.



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- It can cause mood swings and make people less patient and more aggressive or it can bring out a more talkative or quiet person, it depends on many factors

12. ***NOTE TO TEACHER:

This myth or fact shows conflicting evidence in the research. You can choose to use it or not. If you choose to use it, it could be used to demonstrate the following key messages:

- Ensure you are finding your information from credible sources (organizations, university researchers etc. rather than any website on the internet)
- Sometimes there isn't a clear cut answer in black and white, sometimes there is research that shows different sides of a message.

Myth or Fact: Teens can't become alcoholics because they haven't been drinking long enough.

Myth or Fact?!

- You can become dependent on alcohol at any age, it depends on how much and how often you are drinking
- Research shows that teenage drinking starts at an early age (early teens)
- According to a research project that was undertaken by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), people who started drinking before the age of 15 were 4 times more likely to also report meeting the criteria for alcohol dependence at some point in their lives.



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SOURCES

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2. CAMH – About Alcohol

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7. CAMH – About Alcohol

http://www.camh.ca/en/hospital/health_information/a_z_mental_health_and_addiction_information/alcohol/Pages/about_alcohol.aspx

8. Check Yourself.com

<http://checkyourself.com/AlcoholMyths.aspx>

9. Region of Peel – School Health Survey

<http://www.peelregion.ca/health/health-status-report/studenthealth2005/>



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10. CAMH – About Alcohol

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11. AADAC – Alcohol Make No Myth-Stake

<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/2641.asp>

12a. about-alcohol.com

http://www.about-alcohol.com/Alcohol_Abuse_Among_Teenagers.html

12b. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

<http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/AA67/AA67.htm>