

Alcohol Use

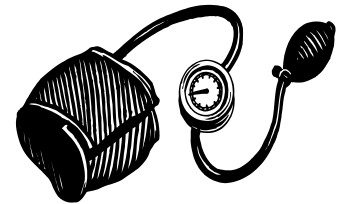


Drinking alcohol in large amounts can have a number of health risks, which increase for people with diabetes or heart disease. Over-the-counter or prescription medication can also have a negative effect when you drink alcohol. Taking medications and drinking alcohol can be harmful to you.

Alcohol and Diabetes

There are several health problems that people with diabetes face when drinking alcohol. According to the [American Diabetes Association](#), it is important for those with diabetes to ask themselves 3 questions before having an alcoholic drink:

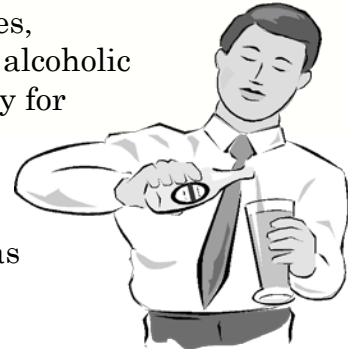
1. Is my diabetes under control?
2. Does my health care provider agree that I am free from health problems that alcohol can make worse – for example, diabetic nerve damage or high blood pressure?
3. Do I know how alcohol can affect me and my diabetes?



If you said "yes" to all three, it's okay to have an occasional drink. But, what does occasional mean?

Recommended Amounts

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, “moderate drinking” is defined as drinking no more than 1 alcoholic drink per day for women and no more than 2 drinks per day for men. This cannot be averaged out throughout the week. For example, even if you do not drink at all for six days of the week and have four drinks on the seventh day, you are still drinking excessively. A standard drink is defined as 13.7 grams (0.6 ounces) of pure alcohol or:



- 12 oz. can/bottle of beer (**145 calories**)
- 8 oz. malt liquor drink (**106 calories**)
- 5 oz. glass of wine (**100 calories**)
- 1.5 oz. or a “shot” of liquor (e.g. rum, vodka, whiskey, or gin) (**115-200 calories**)

Alcohol and Heart Disease

The [American Heart Association](#) warns that there are several factors where drinking alcohol can have a negative effect on those with heart disease. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration warns that people who take aspirin regularly should not drink alcohol. Heart disease patients should stop drinking and keep taking aspirin if their doctor prescribed it for their heart condition.