

# EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON THE BODY

<u>AFFECTED AREA</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>
<b>Central Nervous System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depressed</li><li>• High levels can result in coma/death</li><li>• Gastro-intestinal irritant resulting in ulcers, erosion of lining, and pancreatic irritations.</li></ul>
<b>Liver</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change in fat metabolism and eventually scarring of the liver.</li></ul>
<b>Circulatory System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Temporary increase in heartbeat and blood pressure.</li><li>• Peripheral blood vessels dilate resulting in heat loss and feeling of warmth.</li></ul>
<b>Fluid Balance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water shifts within the body to give feeling of thirst.</li><li>• Diuretic effect increases urine output.</li></ul>
<b>Sensation and Perception</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduced sensitivity to taste and odor.</li><li>• Tunnel vision; reduction in peripheral sight.</li><li>• Limits abilities to distinguish light intensity.</li><li>• Sensitivity to colors, especially red, decreases.</li></ul>
<b>Motor Performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Most types of performance are impaired by intoxicating doses of alcohol.</li><li>• Alcohol increases swaying, especially if eyes are closed.</li><li>• Coordination for tracing moving objects is impaired.</li></ul>

<u>AFFECTED AREA</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>
<b>Attention, Memory, and Conceptual Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inhibits the ability to absorb information from more than one source at a time.</li> <li>• Alcohol affects accuracy and consistency of a task more so than it affects speed.</li> <li>• Significant memory loss occurs with high doses of alcohol and may develop into <b>blackouts</b> involving amnesia.</li> <li>• Creates difficulties in processing and later recalling information.</li> <li>• <b>Heavy drinkers will perform lower on abstraction and adaptive abilities when SOBER than those who drink less heavily.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Emotions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreases inhibitions and "frees" people up in tight social situations.</li> </ul>
<b>Sexuality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large doses of alcohol frustrate sexual performance.</li> <li>• Sex lives become disturbed, deficient, and ineffectual.</li> <li>• Impotency occurs, sometimes reversible with the return of sobriety.</li> <li>• <b>As Shakespeare once said, "Drink provokes the desire, but takes away from the performance".</b></li> </ul>
<b>Sleep</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several drinks decrease REM, or dreaming sleep, resulting in impaired concentration and memory, increased anxiety, tiredness, and irritability.</li> </ul>