

HOW TO SOBER UP FAST

1 Avoid pills.

Do not take ibuprofen, acetaminophen, or aspirin just before, during, or after drinking. Acetaminophen may cause liver damage in conjunction with alcohol. Ibuprofen can cause severe stomach irritation. Aspirin thins the blood, which may exacerbate a hangover.

2 Drink lots of fluids.

Dehydration from alcohol can be treated with water, sweet juices, or sports drinks. Orange juice and tomato juice contain potassium, which will help overcome the shaky feeling of a major hangover.

3 Take vitamins.

A good multivitamin or vitamin B complex combats vitamin depletion.

4 Eat.

Starchy foods—bread, crackers, rice, or pasta—break down into sugar, which speeds absorption of alcohol into your system. A spoonful of honey (which is high in fructose) helps to quickly burn off any remaining alcohol in the stomach. Listen to your body's cravings: if eggs sound good, eat them. If something spicy sounds better, eat that. There are no right or wrong things to eat; just take your food slowly and in small amounts.

5 Rest or sleep for as long as possible.

6 Repeat steps 2 through 5 if you wake up with a hangover.

HOW TO PREVENT A HANGOVER

- Eat before you begin to drink and snack while drinking.
- If you do not eat, coat your stomach with a full glass of milk.
- Pace yourself and drink water between drinks.
- Drink clear liquors. Some spirits are higher in congeners (impurities) than others; red wine, brandies (including cognac), and whiskies usually have more than other types of alcohol. Generally, the clearer your spirit, the fewer impurities and the less severe the hangover.
- Champagne and mixed drinks made with carbonated sodas allow for faster alcohol absorption; they should be sipped slowly.
- Know your limits. In most states, a Blood Alcohol Content (B.A.C.) of .10 means you are legally drunk—and some states now use the stricter .08 B.A.C. For most average-size adults, this can mean as few as two drinks in an hour.
- Do not mix your liquors. Each spirit has different toxins that must be processed by your liver. It is best not to overload it.
- Before going to bed, have a snack of a banana or cheese and crackers.
- Keep water beside your bed and drink it if you awaken during the night.