

Strategies for Lowering Risks Related to Drinking

Students often find it helpful to have a plan for reducing their drinking-related risk.
Which of the following strategies might work for you?

Plan ahead

- Consider choosing not to drink on a day, week, or longer period (safest & healthiest option)
- Plan activities that take the emphasis off drinking (e.g., bowling, sporting event, dinner, show)
- If hosting, have a fun variety of non-alcoholic beverage options available
- Have a plan for turning down a drink
- Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about how your prescription drug(s) interact with alcohol
- Set limits (e.g., on how often you drink, the total number of drinks, the number of drinks per hour, a BAC of $\leq .05\%$, and how much you'll spend on alcohol)
- Ask a friend to help hold you accountable to drinking less or not at all
- Use the buddy system – stick together with trusted friends and take care of each other
- Plan for safe transportation there and back (DD, Uber, taxi, BOSS)

In the moment

- Eat something before and while drinking
- Avoid using alcohol with another drug
- Pay attention to serving sizes (1 drink is a 12 oz. beer, 1.5 oz. 80-proof liquor, or 5 oz. wine)
- Measure and mix your own drink
- Count the number of servings consumed each hour
- Sip instead of slam
- Space drinks to about 1 per hour (allows time to feel the effects of the previous drink before having another, and keeps BAC lower)
- Avoid drinking games and doing shots
- Alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, like water
- Hold a 'decoy' cup
- Leave with a friend(s) if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe

Any time

- Spend time with friends who don't drink or don't make drinking the main event
- Engage in more activities that don't involve alcohol or other drugs
- Enroll in Friday classes
- Respect another person's decision not to drink
- Tell someone about your plan and let them know how they can support you
- If you choose to drink less or not at all, enjoy the extra time, energy, and money you'll have for other interests