

the RED CUP Q&A

separating alcohol fact from fiction

wildfact

In 2016, 38% of UA undergrads did not drink alcohol in the past 30 days. This percentage has increased 66% since 2002. (2016 Health & Wellness Survey, n=3,113)

When do you know if you are a heavy drinker?

Are you a light drinker, a moderate drinker or a heavy drinker? How you answer that question probably has a lot to do with who you hang out with. If you drink heavily and your friends do too, you might consider yourself more of an average/typical drinker when, in fact, that's not the case.

Fortunately there are better ways to gauge your drinking. Should any one of the following describe your alcohol use, you may be in a range consistent with heavy drinking. If you have experienced a few or more, it's a good time for an alcohol use check-up:

1. It takes more to get the same effect – this means you are building up tolerance, a sign your drinking may be headed in the wrong direction.

2. The guidelines seem way off – experts tell us that moderate alcohol use for men is no more than 2 drinks per day/14 drinks per week. For women, it's no more than 1 drink per day/7 drinks per week. If you are exceeding either the daily or weekly limits, you may be a heavy drinker.

3. Your drinking is spilling over – ... and adversely affecting other parts of your life such as your relationships, academics, or work responsibilities.

4. Blackouts – alcohol-induced amnesia very likely means high blood alcohol content (BAC) levels. The not-remembering part only compounds things.

5. Someone said something – if a friend, roommate, professor, coach, or family member has been concerned about your drinking, others are noticing something is up.

6. You have regrets – this could relate to either things you did or said while intoxicated, or more generally, feeling bad or guilty about how much you drink.

7. It's hard to just have a few – when passing out or blacking out becomes the coda to each night you drink, and/or you have trouble setting a limit and sticking to it.

Want more feedback on your alcohol use or thinking of making a change? You can speak to someone at Campus Health by calling (520) 621-5700.

Got a question about alcohol? Email it to redcup@email.arizona.edu



www.health.arizona.edu



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The Red Cup Q&A is written by Lynn Reyes, LCSW, LISAC, David Salafsky, MPH, Lee Ann Hamilton, MA, CHES, Spencer Gorin, RN, and Christiana Castillo, MPH, in the Health Promotion and Preventive Services (HPPS) department of the UA Campus Health Service.