Should you stop drinking alcohol? Yes. Water? No. If you have a cold, it’s important to drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids to avoid dehydration and to help your body recover. This means reducing intake of caffeinated beverages, as well. Drinking alcohol can interfere with getting a good night’s sleep and also inhibit your body from absorbing vital nutrients. Alcohol can increase your blood sugar levels leading to decreased energy, making you feel worse than you do. Getting enough rest and eating nutritious foods can also help you recover from illness quicker.

If you are on antibiotics, you shouldn’t drink alcohol either. Alcohol may not make an antibiotic less effective at treating an infection, but it may make the side effects of both alcohol and antibiotics worse. These side effects can be dangerous and include: flushing, headaches, dizziness, drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, and rapid heart rate.

Bottom line: It’s a good idea to avoid drinking alcoholic beverages when you’re sick, whether or not you are prescribed antibiotics.

And don’t forget to seek help from a medical professional when needed. You can make an appointment by calling Campus Health at (520) 621-6490, or by going online at health.arizona.edu. Walk-ins are also welcome at Campus Health. You can contact CHS Pharmacy at (520) 621-6516 for additional questions or concerns about medications.