



4 TIPS IF YOU DRINK ALCOHOL AND HAVE DIABETES



Tip #1 Limit yourself to 1 drink a day for women and 2 drinks a day for men, if you have well controlled blood sugar. Avoid alcohol if your blood sugar is not controlled.

ALCOHOL CAN RAISE AND LOWER YOUR BLOOD SUGAR



Alcohol can lower your blood sugar and increase your risk of hypoglycemia

Alcoholic beverages high in carbohydrates, such as sweet wines and cocktails with sweetened mixers can raise blood sugar

RISK OF HYPOGLYCEMIA (LOW BLOOD SUGAR)

- ▶ Low blood sugar occurs when your liver chooses to metabolize alcohol over maintaining your blood sugar levels
- ▶ Symptoms of hypoglycemia mimic symptoms of intoxication such as dizziness, confusion, slurred speech, drowsiness, and difficulty walking

AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION (ADA) ALCOHOL RECOMMENDATION

1 DRINK EQUALS...

- ▶ 5 ounces of wine
- ▶ 12 ounces of beer
- ▶ 1.5 ounces of 80 proof spirit



WOMEN

less than 1 drink/day

MEN

less than 2 drinks/day

<https://www.diabetes.org/healthy-living/medication-treatments/alcohol-diabetes>
https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/gim/faculty-resources/core_resources/Patient%20Handouts/Handouts_May_2012/Mixing%20Alcohol%20with%20your%20Diabetes.pdf
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6761899/pdf/arh-22-3-211.pdf>

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Tip #2 Always eat a meal or snack when you drink alcohol to avoid low blood sugar. Test your blood sugar before going to bed if you have had a drink in the evening.

SNACKS/FOOD TO EAT WITH ALCOHOL

- ▶ Always have a small snack such as apple or toast with peanut butter before drinking
- ▶ The effects of alcohol can last up to 12 hours
- ▶ Test your blood sugar before bed, if it is low have a snack

THE NEXT DAY, THE HANGOVER

- ▶ Before drinking alcohol, always set an alarm to wake up the next morning and test your blood sugar
- ▶ This is especially important so you do not miss medication or insulin



Tip #3 People with diabetes are advised to choose lower calorie light beers, dry wines, or use mixers that are low in calories and sugar such as diet soft drinks, water, or seltzer.



Beverage	Serving Size	Calories	Carbohydrates
Beer, regular	12 oz	150	13 grams
Beer, light	12 oz	100	5 grams
Beer, non-alcoholic	12 oz	75	16 grams
Distilled spirits	1.5 oz	100	< 1 gram
Martini	5 oz	310	4 grams
Wine, red	4 oz	80	2 grams
Wine, white	4 oz	80	1 gram



BEST ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CHOICES

Light beers, dry wines, and mixed drinks

- ▶ Use diet soft drinks, water, or seltzer as a mixer

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES TO AVOID

Sweet wines and mixed drinks

- ▶ Such as pina colodas and wine coolers

Makers of alcoholic beverages are not required to post nutrition facts on their labels, so it can be difficult to know how many calories and carbohydrates various drinks really contain.

Tip #4 Always communicate to your health care providers if you drink alcohol regularly or if your drinking habits change.

YOU SHOULD AVOID ALCOHOL IF YOU HAVE:



- ▶ Damage to eyes (diabetic retinopathy)
- ▶ Uncontrolled high blood pressure
- ▶ Burning or tingling in hands and feet (diabetic neuropathy)
- ▶ High triglycerides
- ▶ Damage to kidneys
- ▶ Uncontrolled blood sugars or elevated HbA1c