

Diabetes and Alcohol

Many people with type 2 diabetes want to know if they can still have a beer with friends or a glass of wine with dinner. According to the American Diabetes Association, it's probably okay, as long as you follow these tips:

First things first. **Talk to your doctor or diabetes educator.** Learn how alcohol interacts with insulin or other medications you take. Find out if drinking is safe for other medical conditions you have.

Take it easy. Everyone who chooses to drink alcohol should do so in moderation. This means up to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men. One drink is 1.5 ounces of distilled liquor, 12 ounces of beer, or 4 ounces of wine.

Eat when you drink. Drinking on an empty stomach can lead to dangerously low blood sugar. Have your drink with a healthy meal or snack that contains carbohydrate. Don't

count the alcohol as a carb choice or replace another food with it.

Keep it simple. A light beer. A wine spritzer made with club soda or seltzer. A mixed drink made with diet soda, seltzer, club soda, diet tonic water, or water.

Keep tabs on your numbers. Check your blood sugar before, during, and after drinking alcohol. While a drink may initially increase your blood sugar, it can cause low blood sugar hours later (delayed hypoglycemia). Check your blood sugar for up to 24 hours after drinking, and be sure to check it before you go to bed.

Show your I.D. If your blood sugar drops too low, you will appear sleepy, dizzy, and disoriented, as if you are drunk. Wear a medical I.D. to let others know that you have diabetes—it may save your life.

By Hollis Bass, MEd, RD



BROUGHT TO YOU BY: