

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Many prescription drugs are definitely not to be mixed with alcohol. Make sure you've checked this out. Also, many over-the-counter cold and flu medications should not be mixed with alcohol. Women also are likely to be more susceptible to the effects of alcohol when taking birth control pills or other medications containing estrogen.

Think twice before taking aspirin or other headache remedies before you drink to prevent a hangover. Studies show that men's BAC after taking aspirin can be 40 to 100 percent higher than for the same amount of alcohol without aspirin. These higher BAC levels last for nearly 90 minutes after the drink. (No word yet on whether the same thing happens to women.) The reason is that aspirin in the stomach suppresses the enzyme that helps the body break down alcohol before it gets into the blood. Similar results have been seen with acetaminophen, the pain-killing ingredient in Tylenol and other over-the-counter medications.

[MORE](#)

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS (continued)

In both men and women, alcohol exaggerates the effects of antihistamines, which are a key ingredient in many over-the-counter cold, flu and allergy remedies. The combination of alcohol and antihistamines can cause severe central nervous system depression. Things get even more complicated when the flu/cold/allergy remedies contain aspirin or acetaminophen (the pain-killing ingredient in Tylenol). That's because these painkillers can increase your BAC, which means an even greater risk of the alcohol exaggerating the effect of the antihistamines. And then -- Whew! Meltdown!

[click anywhere to continue](#)