

December 2019



S.A.F.E. Newsletter

Tips for a Safe Holiday



The holiday season is one of the most fun and joyous season of the year. But, it can also be one of the most dangerous of the year. It is estimated that during Christmas and New Year's season, almost 95 million Americans will be on the road traveling to visit family and friends. In addition, people are more likely to drink and drive around New Year's Day than during any other major holiday of the year. It is estimated that almost half of all car accidents on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are due to drinking and driving.

Many people plan for New Year's Eve celebration and this often includes alcohol consumption. People usually make responsible plans by having designated drivers or hiring a cab. But, not everyone makes good decisions by drinking and driving when they definitely shouldn't.

Don't Drink and Drive

January 1 is the number 1 day of the year with the highest percentage of deaths related to alcohol. Using available data from 2011 through 2016 of fatal crash data, IIHS (Insurance Institute for Highway Safety) researchers found that on every New Year's Day, an average of 70 lives were lost in crashes in which at least one driver, pedestrian or bicyclist had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08% or higher. Sixty-one percent of the average of 133 crash deaths on January 1 were due to alcohol impairment. The more alcohol consumed, the slower the activity of the brain, heart and lungs. Before you celebrate, plan ahead. Have a designated driver, or at the least take a cab or Uber. Beware of drunk drivers and always wear your seatbelt.



If you will be Drinking, Pace Yourself

A little known fact is that our bodies absorb alcohol faster than we metabolize it. The quicker we drink, the more time the toxins from the alcohol spend in our bodies, resulting in harsher hangovers. Drink no more than one drink an hour as our livers metabolize about one alcoholic beverage per hour. Also, remember that not all drinks are equal and one beer does not equal six shots (12 oz. beer = 4-5 oz. of wine = 1.5oz of hard liquor). When drinking, sip slowly. Order your drinks on-the-rocks as the melting ice dilutes the drink and ask for more club soda or tonic water in your drink than alcohol.

Know what to mix, and what not to mix

Be sure to stick with the same drink all night. While mixing drinks does not cause greater intoxication, it can make you sick and cause you to have a greater hangover. Choose light liquors such vodka to lessen hangovers as dark liquors have a higher concentration of toxins, causing more severe hangovers. Mix dark liquors with noncarbonated fruit juice or water instead of soda. Do not mix diet drinks with alcohol as the lack of sugar and calories causes the alcohol to go directly to your bloodstream.

Alternate alcoholic drinks with water

Alcohol is a diuretic so the more you drink, the more you urinate which can lead to dehydration. This causes hangover symptoms such as headaches and dizziness. Try to drink at least one large glass of water before and in between drinking alcoholic beverages. This will help keep you from getting too intoxicated.

Eat before you drink and snack while you drink

Never drink on an empty stomach. Be sure to eat a full meal before drinking, and continue snacking while drinking. Eating while drinking will slow down the absorption of alcohol in the digestive system, giving the alcohol more time to metabolize in the

body. Eat foods high in protein such as cheese, meat and nuts. Fatty carbs also work well but, they are not as healthy.

Myth: Coffee sobers you up

While coffee may help wake you up, it will not sober you up. This is a MYTH. The only cure for being drunk is time. If you can't wait to sober up, get a ride from a sober driver or call a cab. Do not risk getting into an accident and hurting yourself, or someone else.



UAMS Drivers who have been convicted of a DUI/DWI or who have a drug or alcohol related charge on their driving record are considered high risk drivers for insurance purposes and are prohibited from driving until the DUI/DWI/drug charge no longer appears on their record.

Information for this article was obtained from the following sources:

<http://www.insurancejournal.com/news/national/2016/12/29/436807.htm>

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-david-samadi/new-years-eve-tips-for-a-safe-and-healthy-holiday_b_8891744.html