

Facts about alcohol

Alcohol slows down your body and mind.

TRUE. Alcohol is a depressant; it leaves you unable to think, react, and make decisions as you normally would. If you drink enough to get alcohol poisoning, your brain slows down so much you can stop breathing and can die.

Alcohol affects different people in different ways.

TRUE. Alcohol's effects depend on a person's age, sex, and body weight, and on hereditary factors. The same person can be affected differently at different times of the day, depending on how much they've eaten, how tired they are, and many other factors. Because young people's bodies are smaller and still developing, alcohol has a greater impact on their physical and mental health than it does on an adult.

You feel alcohol's effects right away.

TRUE. Alcohol is absorbed very quickly (within 5-10 minutes). It passes from your stomach directly into your bloodstream and affects every organ, including your brain.

Beer and wine are as harmful as other forms of alcohol.

TRUE. There is about the same amount of alcohol in a 12-ounce can of beer as there is in a mixed drink that contains 1 ounce of hard liqueur or in a 5-ounce glass of wine.

Some of the signs that a person has a problem with alcohol are:

- Getting drunk on a regular basis.
- Lying about how much alcohol he or she is using.
- Believing that alcohol is necessary to have fun.
- Forgetting what happened while drinking.

TRUE. You can and should help by encouraging the person to stop drinking and to seek professional help.

Ref: Talk with your fifth grader about underage drinking; Centre for Substance Abuse Prevention