

TAKE A



Shot Q&A

Q. My friend says she catches a better buzz and saves calories when she doesn't eat before a night of drinking. Truth?

A.

This sounds great in theory, but in reality your friend isn't doing herself any favors.

It's no surprise drinking on an empty stomach turns you into Drunky McDrunkerson in a jiffy. This is great until Drunky McD. turns into a sloppy-pukey mess all within a few hours. *How did that happen?*

With nothing in your stomach to slow the rate of absorption, alcohol travels quickly to your bloodstream, rapidly increasing blood alcohol concentration (BAC) and impairments before even realizing how drunk you are. Alcohol's effects are biphasic, so the most desirable effects such as euphoria, stimulation, social benefits and stress reduction are felt in Phase I (.02-.06 BAC). Phase II (BAC above .06) often leads to more of the undesirable outcomes we are later embarrassed about, such as diarrhea of the mouth, negative emotions and bad decisions. Not only is our judgement and self-control impaired during Phase II, so are our sensory functions such as smell and taste, making it easier to throw back shots like a champ and drink more. MAS TEQUILA!

The second reason your friend isn't doing herself any favors by skipping meals before drinking is because alcohol lowers our inhibitions, making it seem totally acceptable to eat that entire frozen pizza during an attack of the drunk munchies. On top of the "I could care less about carbs and calories" attitude we take on when wasted, researchers from Sussex, UK discovered alcohol actually stimulates the appetite control center of your brain, known as the hypothalamus. So not only are you lacking taste buds *and* self-control, you're in hungry-hippo mode, where any and all food will do. Nothing is safe. Including that old, leftover tuna casserole mom sent home with you a couple weeks ago. With all these odds against you, even the most health conscious, dedicated dieter will have a hard time avoiding that drunken midnight-munchy sesh, especially after skipping meals all day.

If you are calorie-conscious but still want to enjoy a few adult beverages, consider eating a protein-based meal before drinking in moderation. Despite what many people believe, eating food before or while drinking will NOT prevent you from getting drunk. The food will simply slow the rate of absorption, helping you ease into that sweet buzz rather than bypassing the feel-good effects of alcohol and landing yourself in an drunken, sloppy rage.

MAYFACT:

82% of Mavericks say they always eat before and/or while drinking.

(NCHA, 2014)



GOT A QUESTION

about substance use?

Email it to: healthservices@mnsu.edu

MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANKATO

Student Health Services
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