

## Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Level Information and Chart

Of course, it is important to define what is meant by “a drink”. Normally, a drink is thought of as:

- One beer
- One mixed drink
- One glass of wine
- One shot of alcohol

But it is important to understand that the formal definition is actually:

- 12 ounces of beer
- 4-5 ounces glass of wine (12-15% alcohol by volume)
- 1.5 ounces of 80 proof (40% alcohol) distilled spirits

Each of these contains the same amount of pure ethanol, about 0.6 ounces. In other words, a 20-ounce mug of beer is considered more than a drink—it is actually closer to a drink and a half. If a person orders a mixed drink at a bar or at a party, it may be possible that whoever mixed the drink may have put in two or three ounces of alcohol.

All of these factors will determine the amount of alcohol in a person’s blood, which is measured as the BAC, or Blood Alcohol Concentration.

## Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Levels

- .01–.07** You feel mildly relaxed, a little lightheaded. Your inhibitions are loosened, and you feel less cautious. Judgment abilities are slightly impaired. No real feeling of the depressant effects of alcohol seen yet. Your behavior may become exaggerated and your emotions intensified.
- .08–.13** Your motor skills are starting to become impaired and your sense of balance may be compromised. Your emotions become a bit exaggerated—perhaps loud, perhaps aggressive. It is dangerous (and illegal) for you to drive. Your judgment is impaired, and you may have difficulty evaluating sexual situations. You believe you are functioning better than you actually are.
- .14–.19** The “good feelings” of euphoria begin to give way to some negative feelings such as anxiety and restlessness. You may begin to feel tired because the depressant qualities of alcohol begin to take effect. If you are a man, you will have difficulty achieving or maintaining an erection. You will have trouble walking or standing, and you will greatly increase the chance of hurting yourself physically. You may get nauseous.
- .20–.24** You feel confused and disoriented. At this point you might experience nausea and, since your gag reflex is impaired, you may choke on your vomit. You have trouble standing. You may not realize that you hurt yourself because you might not feel pain. Blackouts become likely at this point.
- .25–.29** Almost all aspects of your brain are severely impaired. You may have passed out by this point. Vomiting is likely and the chance of asphyxiation on your own vomit is greatly increased. If you have not passed out, the risk of personal injury is high because you have little to no physical control. You are emotionally numb.
- .30–.34** If you are still awake, you are in a stupor. You likely have no comprehension of where you are or what you are doing. There have been numerous cases of alcohol poisoning and death in this range of BAC. You are in need of medical help.
- .35 & UP** You have reached the level of surgical anesthesia. Coma is possible. The lungs and heart rate are slowing to the point of stopping. You need immediate medical help.

