

If you choose to drink alcohol, reduce your risk by taking these steps:

- * Eat a big meal before drinking. The best foods to eat are high in carbohydrates and protein; for example, a burger (veggie, beef, turkey, etc.) and fries, hummus and chips, or a peanut butter sandwich.
- * Figure out how you will get home safely before you go out.
- * Decide how much you will drink and at what point you will stop drinking before you start. Tell a friend your plan.
- * Know your limits and respect them. If you know 5 drinks are too much for you, why not drink fewer (1 to 4) to stay in control and reduce your risk?
- * Pace yourself. Remember that our bodies can only process about one standard drink per hour.

One standard drink means:

1 -- 1.5 oz shot of 80 proof liquor OR

1 -- 12 oz. bottle or can of beer OR

1 -- 5 oz. glass of wine

- * Avoid drinking games that require you to drink a lot in a short amount of time. If you choose to play a drinking game, choose games that take longer and don't involve chugging.
- * If you don't know what's in your drink, don't drink it. Make your own drinks if possible so you know exactly what and how much goes in your cup.
- * Alternate nonalcoholic drinks (ideally water) with alcoholic drinks to stay hydrated and space out the time between alcoholic drinks.
- * The decision how much to drink that night is yours, not your friends'. You make the decisions because you deal with the consequences.
- * Talk to your family about any history of abuse and addiction. It's important because that history may influence your drinking choices.