

AKA: BOOZE, BREW, CHARGE,  
GOON, GROG, LIQUID GOLD,  
LONGNECK, MOONSHINE, PISS,  
SHOTS, TALLIE



# ALCOHOL



Disclaimer: This resource is produced by Hi-Ground & DanceWize. In an unregulated market it's impossible to know the purity or dose of any substance, educate yourself and practice harm reduction to reduce this risk. For more information visit [www.hi-ground.org](http://www.hi-ground.org)

Supported by: QuIVAA & QuIHN

**Hi-Ground**

Alcohol is the most widely used psychoactive drug in Australia. Given its legal status, it is widely accepted and readily available. The intoxicating ingredient, ethanol, is found in beer, wine and spirits and is produced by fermenting sugars, yeasts and starches. Alcohol is a depressant that acts on the central nervous system (CNS) slowing down breathing and heart rate making your body and mind more relaxed.

**Compound:** ETHANOL

## ADMINISTRATION

Commonly swallowed. But can also be consumed rectally.



## DURATION OF EFFECTS

<b>TOTAL</b>	1.5-3HRS
<b>ONSET</b>	15-30MINS
<b>PEAK</b>	15-90MINS
<b>COME DOWN</b>	45-60MINS
<b>AFTER EFFECTS</b>	1-36HRS

## MOST COMMON EFFECTS

Giddiness / Dizziness, Flushing of the face, Warming sensations, Pain relief, Reduced impulse control, Lowered inhibitions, impaired judgement, Decreased coordination, Difficulty focusing eyes, Frequent urination, Dehydration, Blackouts and memory loss in high doses, Confusion, Nausea/vomiting, Mild to severe hangover the next day, Tolerance due to repeated or regular use, Drowsiness/sleepiness, Happiness, Relaxation, Emotionally volatile – angry, depressed, aggressive, sad, etc, 'Beer Goggles' – others appear more attractive.

## LESS COMMON EFFECTS

Reduced ability to maintain erection/achieve orgasm, Depression/despair, Increased response to sexual stimuli, Visual distortions at high doses, Fetal damage in pregnant women.

## LONG TERM EFFECTS

Cirrhosis of the liver, Cancer (mouth, pharynx, larynx, oesophagus, stomach), Heart and blood problems incl. stroke and hypertension, Alcohol dependence, Stomach problems, Lowered immune system, Nerve problems (arms and legs), Alcohol related brain injury, Problems with family, friends, work, finances etc.

## HALF LIFE

Alcohol does not have a 'half life' like other drugs and passes rapidly through your system. Alcohol is metabolized at a constant rate, but some people may feel the effects of alcohol for longer amounts of time (In general terms, your body metabolises a standard drink in 60-90 minutes). After excessive alcohol consumption you may find that your BAC (blood alcohol concentration) is still over the legal limit several hours after you have ceased drinking.

## DRUG TESTS

**Roadside Police:** Alcohol is detectable by roadside breath test, which measures the amount of alcohol in your breath. A breath test reading of 0.05 or higher is considered drink driving for fully licensed drivers in Australia (different limits apply for other license types e.g. probationary or heavy vehicle).

## SAFER USING

As with other drugs, tolerance can vary greatly from one person to another, based on body weight, age, recent meals, general health, how often you drink and how well your liver functions. Tolerance also plays a part in how quickly you get drunk.

- Always pour or order your own drink so you can keep track of what you are drinking. Never leave a drink unattended. The most common substance to be spiked with is more alcohol.
- Use a nip-pourer if drinking spirits to accurately measure out one shot
- Excessive consumption may lead to alcohol poisoning.
- As a legal drug, alcohol use is normalised. People often forget that it is a drug and can impair your decision-making abilities.
- Remember, if mixing with other drugs, alcohol is also a drug.
- A tip for breastfeeding Mothers, alcohol gets into your breast milk from your blood, moving freely from the blood to the breast milk (and back out again). Alcohol will be in your breastmilk 30-60 minutes after you start drinking. It is safest to breastfeed before drinking alcohol however if you choose to drink, a general recommended dose is keeping to the same amount as you would to be able to legally drive (0.05 BAC). Be mindful it takes most women 1.5-2hrs to process one standard drink.
- Generally to maintain a legal BAC level for drivers is:
- Men - 2 x standard drinks in the first hour and 1x drink every 1.5 hours later
- Women - 1x standard drink in the first hour and 1x drink every 1.5 - 2 hours later