

Sobering up- Myths vs. Facts



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Caldwell Borough

It is no surprise that on New Year's Eve a popular activity is to consume alcohol with family and loved ones. With New Year's Eve and Day statistically having the highest rates of drunk driving reports, it is important to debunk popular myths so we can ring in this New Year in a safe and responsible way.

Myth vs. Fact

Myth: You can drive as long as you are not slurring your words or acting erratically.

Fact: The coordination needed for driving is compromised long before the signs of intoxication are visible and one's reaction time is slowed. Plus, the sedative effects of alcohol increase the risk of nodding off or losing attention behind the wheel.

Myth: Drink coffee. Caffeine will sober you up.

Fact: Caffeine may help with drowsiness, but not with the effects of alcohol on decision-making or coordination. The body needs time to metabolize (break down) alcohol and then to return to normal. Also, when caffeine wears off, there are the additive effects of the increased sedative effects of alcohol and post-caffeine sleepiness. There are no quick cures—only time will help.

Myth: The warm feeling you get from drinking alcohol insulates you from the cold of winter. When you're drinking, there's no need to wear a coat when it's cold outside.

Fact: Alcohol widens the tiny blood vessels right under the skin, so they quickly fill with warm blood. This makes you feel warm or hot, and can cause your skin to flush and perspire. But your body temperature is actually dropping, because while alcohol is pulling warmth from your core to the skin surface, it is also depressing the area of your brain that controls temperature regulation. In cold environments, this can lead to hypothermia. So, wear a coat when it's cold outside, particularly if you are drinking alcohol.

For more information on this topic visit:

https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/RethinkHoliday/NIAAA_NYE_Fact_Sheet.htm