



Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)

JAN 2021

LENGTH 2–5 minutes

TO PREPARE Read the background information.

BACKGROUND

- Alcohol consumption among adults is a common reality, and as an employer, you might be thinking it's an off-the-job behavior, so what does it have to do with the workplace? Your employees can learn from you the reality of drinking, driving, hangovers, and the after-effects. Now is the right time to talk with all of your employees about how they manage their social times that involve drinking alcohol.
- Discussing the topic of blood alcohol content matters to the employer for many reasons. The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence stated that **nationally, 24% of workers admitted to drinking at work during the past year, and one-fifth of employees said their safety and productivity have been at risk due to a fellow employee's drinking habits.**
- In this Safety huddle, employees can learn how to measure and monitor their risks associated with drinking, and what it means to feel a little rough the next day after drinking alcohol.

DISCUSSION

- Have you ever wondered what blood alcohol concentration (BAC) has to do with a person's ability to be safe while driving or performing job tasks? A person with BAC 0.117 at 2 a.m. will need up to 9 hours to clear their system of alcohol, and may come to work impaired at 8 a.m.



You and your friends are attending an event where alcohol is served. You have a plan that involves a Designated Driver (DD). But things have changed, and your DD is no longer available. Plan B might include which of the following?

- Calling a cab or ride share
- Calling a friend who's sober
- Staying over for the night



Other than the amount of alcohol consumed during a given amount of time, what factors influence blood alcohol concentration (BAC)?

- Gender
- Amount of food present in the body
- Medications present in the body
- Body temperature
- Spices in food consumed and present in the body

Impairment begins at the first drink.

- Impairment at a BAC level of 0.02 will include loss of judgment and trouble doing two tasks at once. [This could be 2 beers]
- Impairment at a BAC level of 0.05 shows as reduced coordination and ability to track moving objects; difficulty steering. [This could be 3 beers]
- Impairment at a BAC level of 0.08 shows as trouble controlling speed and difficulty processing information and reasoning. [This could be 4 beers]

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION

Calculating BAC

If time allows for exploring how to calculate BAC, use this link:

- <https://www.autorevolution.com/bac/>

You will need to input gender, weight, number of hours since alcohol was consumed, and types and quantities consumed.

SUMMARY

- Making plans for any event where alcohol will be served should include safe methods of traveling from and getting home, and alternate plans.
- A person who consumes alcohol can be impaired for several hours afterwards, resulting in hangover symptoms and inconsistent work performance. Know your risks before your job, and more, is impacted.