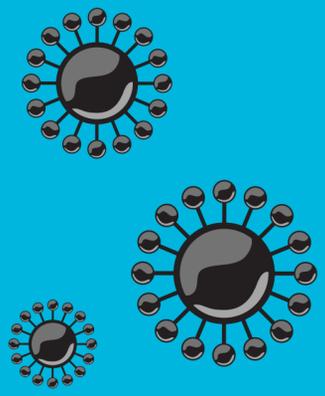




ALCOHOL AND COVID-19



HOW ARE ALCOHOL AND COVID-19 RELATED?

It is still unclear if direct links exist between alcohol consumption and COVID-19, but alcohol does appear to impact the immune system. According to the World Health Organization, "alcohol as an immunosuppressant increases the risk of communicable disease." (4) Studies indicate that there is an association between excessive alcohol consumption and negative impacts on the immune system, such as [increased susceptibility to pneumonia](#). (1) Because COVID-19 has harmful effects on the lungs, this could increase the risk of complications for individuals consuming more than recommended.

DOES HOW MUCH I AM DRINKING MATTER?

Drinking in high risk quantities (5 or more drinks for men and 4 or more drinks for women in a two-hour period) may make the immune system less active. (2,3) For those making the decision to drink, the CDC recommends only drinking in moderation, which is defined as no more than one drink per day for women and no more than two drinks per day for men (2).

*Please keep in mind that OPEN is not giving permission to drink and that you must be 21 years or older to legally drink in the U.S.

Alcohol appears to have an impact on the immune system and its ability to function, which could have implications in the wake of this rapidly spreading virus. (1)

DOES ALCOHOL AFFECT HOW THE BODY HEALS?

Excessive alcohol consumption is associated with [slower healing in the body](#). Whether it be muscle repair and growth post-workout or healing from a wound, the body will need more time to repair itself if alcohol has been in the system. (5)

WHAT ELSE?

[Alcohol consumption can also impact sleep](#). Sleep is a major component of immune system functioning and bodily healing and growth. (6) In order to keep our bodies functioning at their highest capacities, [it is recommended to minimize the amount of alcohol consumed](#).

TIPS AND SWAPS:

- Grab a flavored seltzer water instead of a spiked seltzer
- Have virtual coffee or tea with your friends and family
- Focus on other activities that bring you joy, like moving your body or playing games
- Pay attention to how much sleep you are getting
 - Aim for at least 7-8 hours every night

If you are concerned about your alcohol use, you can schedule a confidential meeting with an OPEN staff member by emailing open@northeastern.edu.

