

ALCOHOL POISONING

Alcohol depresses nerves that control involuntary actions such as breathing and the gag reflex (which prevents choking). A fatal dose of alcohol will eventually stop these functions.

It is common for someone who drank excessive alcohol to vomit since alcohol is an irritant to the stomach. There is then the danger of choking on vomit, which could cause death by asphyxiation in a person who is not conscious because of intoxication.

You should also know that a person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) can continue to rise even while he or she is passed out. Even after a person stops drinking, alcohol in the stomach and intestine continues to enter the bloodstream and circulate throughout the body. It is dangerous to assume the person will be fine by sleeping it off.

Critical Signs for Alcohol Poisoning

- Mental confusion
 - Stupor
- Person cannot be roused
 - Vomiting
 - Seizures
- Slow breathing (fewer than eight breaths per minute)
- Irregular breathing (10 seconds or more between breaths)
 - Hypothermia (low body temperature)
 - Bluish skin color, paleness

What Should I Do If I Suspect Someone Has Alcohol Poisoning?

Do not wait for all symptoms to be present —call 911 immediately.

Turn the intoxicated person on their side and keep them in that position until help arrives

Don't be afraid to seek medical help for a friend who has had too much to drink. Don't worry that your friend may become angry or embarrassed-remember, you cared enough to help. **Always be safe, not sorry!**