

ALCOHOL'S INTERACTION WITH NUTRIENTS IN THE BODY

Think before you drink!

Drinking too much alcohol can quickly lead to serious health problems like car accidents, falls, burns, violence, and pregnancy issues for women (1). In terms of nutrition, ethanol can make it harder for your body to get the nutrients it needs, which can lead to malnutrition.

HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

Here are ways alcohol can affect the nutrients in your body

THIAMINE (VITAMIN B1)

Thiamine is important for our cells to work well and turn carbohydrates into energy for the brain and nervous system. Drinking too much alcohol can mess with enzymes in the body, making it hard for organs to use thiamine. This can lead to not having enough thiamine in our cells. (3)

RIBOFLAVIN (VITAMIN B2)

Riboflavin is important for the growth and function of cells in your body. It helps fight harmful substances that can damage your cells. Drinking alcohol regularly can inhibit the uptake and absorption of riboflavin in your body, leading to a deficiency. (4)

PYRIDOXINE (VITAMIN B6)

Vitamin B6 is important for many body processes, like breaking down proteins. It also helps our nervous and immune systems stay healthy. Drinking too much alcohol can lower B6 levels in the body and affect how our body works. (5)

Alcoholics often do not get enough of these nutrients in their diets

FOLATE (VITAMIN B9)

Folate is important for making red blood cells and is vital for preventing birth defects in early pregnancy. Alcohol alters digestion & absorption of folate, decreasing its uptake by the liver and conservation by the kidneys resulting in deficiency. (5,6)

RETINOL (VITAMIN A)

Vitamin A is important for good vision, a healthy immune system, reproduction, growth, and development. Drinking too much alcohol can decrease vitamin A levels in the liver, move vitamin A to other parts of the body, and cause liver damage. (7)

COBALAMIN (VITAMIN B12)

Vitamin B12 is important for healthy blood and nerve cells and making DNA in our bodies. Drinking too much alcohol can stop your body from taking in enough B12, causing a lack of it. (5)

WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS?



Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that men should limit their alcohol intake to 2 drinks or less per day, and women should limit their intake to 1 drink or less per day (8)



People who should NOT drink alcohol are pregnant women, those under 21, those driving or planning to drive, people taking certain medications, and individuals with medical conditions (1)



Make sure to get enough of these nutrients in your diet or take multivitamin supplements as recommended by your doctor. Avoid taking too much Vitamin A because alcoholism can make it toxic!

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