

Welcome Back, DSU Students!

Hi students! Welcome back to Dakota State University for the Spring 2010 semester! I hope that you are all as excited as me for a new decade, a new year, and a new semester and that you are all gearing up to make this decade, year, and semester the best yet!

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Nicole Rieckman and I am the Dakota State University Alcohol and Other Drugs Counselor. I have been at DSU since May 2008; I started as the Retention Specialist for the Assessment Office and then began my duties as the Alcohol and Other Drugs Counselor at the end of September 2009. My educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from the University of South Dakota and a Master of Science degree in Counseling and Student Personnel from South Dakota State University. I am also a Nationally Certified Counselor and am currently working toward my counseling licensure. On a personal note, I live in Sioux Falls, I enjoy reading, kickball, and volleyball, and I love everything from the 80's!

This is the first of what is about to become a quarterly newsletter from the Alcohol and Other Drugs Office. My philosophy as the Alcohol and Other Drugs Counselor is one that emphasizes harm reduction as well as abstinence (depending on the student). This means that I want to concentrate my programs on the dangerous aspects of alcohol and drug use: binge drinking, alcohol poisoning, alcohol overdose, mixing alcohol and other drugs (legal or illegal), driving under the influence, and unwanted sexual experiences. The purpose is to provide you with lots of information concerning these issues that pertain to you—whether or not you drink or use drugs, odds are that you know someone else who does. It is my sincere hope that you will take the information my office provides seriously and that you will utilize the wide array of services available to you at Dakota State University. In addition, if you have an idea for activities, support groups, newsletter ideas, etc., please contact me and I will see what we can do to implement your idea!

I am so excited to continue my work with Dakota State University students—whether it be through awareness activities and programming events, personal counseling, chemical dependency counseling, academic probation, policy enforcement, or in the class I will be teaching in the College of Education! And if I don't work with you in any of these areas, please feel free to stop by, introduce yourself, and grab a piece of candy!

Are You Curious about the DSU Alcohol and Other Drugs Program?

The DSU AOD program is more than the office you go to if you receive an alcohol violation!!

We offer:

Counseling Services:

- Confidential Counseling
 - o Chemical Dependency
 - o Personal
 - o Academic
- Referrals to Community Counseling
- Financial assistance with services at Community Counseling (only by referral)

AOD Education and Prevention:

- INSIGHT Alcohol Classes
- Guest Speakers
- Support Groups
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Various Awareness Activities
- Peer mentoring
- Information

For more information, please contact:

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AOD on Facebook: Search DSU AOD Program and Become a Fan!

Beer Pong Bumpers

Nicole Rieckman, AOD Counselor

What do you like to do for fun? Play sports? Watch movies? Drink alcohol? If you drink alcohol for fun, do you participate in drinking games like beer pong or tippy cup? Did you or do you plan on partaking in the challenge of drinking 21 shots for your 21st birthday? For some people, especially young adults, binge drinking is a regular activity in which the real consequences are often ignored until it is too late. Alcohol poisoning is a real consequence of drinking to excess. It is not a joke and it is something that everyone, especially college students, needs to have information on and needs to take seriously. Courtesy of the BACCHUS Network, please review the following information on alcohol poisoning:

Alcohol Poisoning

Alcohol Poisoning is a real occurrence taking place on college and university campuses. Some students are drinking heavily and quickly and becoming medical emergencies, or worse – fatalities. Certainly, most students don't drink to excess and campuses and peer education groups are doing everything they can to educate students to prevent a tragedy from happening. However, when all the educational programs are over, sometimes it all comes down to friendship.

Alcohol poisoning occurs when someone puts a large amount of alcohol into their system. There are a lot of reasons why people drink; to be social, they like the feeling of being impaired, to be less self-conscious, to forget their problems, -we could go on and on. But there is a difference between drinking and drinking way too much.

Alcohol poisoning is an overdose of alcohol. Alcohol poisoning is deadly. The brain begins to shut down involuntary functions that regulate breathing and heart rate sometimes resulting in death. The amount of alcohol that causes alcohol poisoning is different for every person. It is not possible to accurately predict for each person what amount will cause them to overdose.

When we hear of a person who has died as a result of alcohol poisoning, typically one of two things happen.

- The person stopped breathing. The depressant level of the alcohol was so high that the drinker simply stopped breathing and his or her heart stopped beating.
- The person choked on their vomit. The drinker passed out, was laying on their back, threw up and choked on his or her vomit.

Why People Drink to Excess

1. *Lack of drinking experience/information about alcohol*

Sometimes people don't understand their limits. They have not learned how quickly they can become intoxicated and they drink way too much and way too fast, and by the time they realize things are not going well, it is too late.

2. *Misperception that drinking to excess is normal*

Often people abandon their own personal limits because they think, mistakenly, that everyone else is drinking at a much higher level than they are, and they feel like they should match those levels. People notice when someone drinks to excess and they pay attention to that. When someone has just one or two drinks, the behavior doesn't stand out. People will tell stories about wild nights of excessive drinking. People are less likely to tell stories about just having a few drinks and talking or dancing, etc. Nationally, student research tells us that the majority of students drink moderately and responsibly.

3. *Too much alcohol too fast*

Most cases of alcohol poisoning come down to simple math. A person drinks more alcohol than his/her body can handle. The liver can only process about one drink per hour. If a person ingests more alcohol than the body can safely process, it can lead to intoxication or, if excessive alcohol is consumed, to alcohol poisoning.

4. *Playing drinking games.* (quarters, beer pong, etc.) It is not uncommon for a person playing a drinking game to drink the equivalent of 8-10 drinks in an hour.

5. *Shots.* Friends sometimes buy birthday or celebratory multiple shots. It goes without saying that the body cannot handle a high volume of shots, especially if they are consumed in a short period of time.

6. *Pre-party or front-loading alcohol before going out.* What makes this dangerous is not only do people get drunk before they leave for a party, bar or club, but they usually continue to drink once they get there.

7. *Pressure to drink to excess.* Sometimes a person has no intention of drinking to excess, but that decision is counteracted by pressure from someone else to drink a lot. This can happen because of a lack of assertiveness, or when the drinker gets enough alcohol in their system to affect their judgment about the situation.



Major Factors that Affect Alcohol Absorption

Weight - The weight of a person greatly affects the distribution of alcohol throughout the body. The smaller the person, the less room for alcohol to distribute itself.

Gender - Generally, men can handle more alcohol than women. This is because women are usually smaller, have more body fat and have lower total body water content than men. Also, a woman's ability to metabolize alcohol can be affected by her menstrual cycle due to higher levels of estrogen. All of this contributes to higher concentrations of alcohol in a woman's system even if she is drinking the same amount as a man.

Other drugs or medications in the system - Alcohol is a depressant. Any illegal, prescription or over the counter drug is likely to react with alcohol and may increase intoxication or negative effects.

Rate of Consumption - Your body will only process about one drink of alcohol per hour. Chugging, doing shots or playing drinking games increases consumption rates of alcohol.

Food in the stomach - Your stomach lining absorbs alcohol directly into your blood stream. Food slows down that absorption of alcohol.

Type of Drink - Diluting alcohol with water or juices reduces the volume of alcohol your blood stream. Drinking straight alcohol or alcohol mixed with carbonated beverages speeds up absorption.

In its simplest form, calculating a person's BAC level is based on how much alcohol went into what kind of body over a period of how much time. When you drink alcohol, the percentage of alcohol increases with each drink, or your BAC increases with each drink.

Strategies to Prevent Alcohol Poisoning

Preventing alcohol poisoning has to start with understanding how alcohol affects the body. There comes a point, called the point of diminishing returns, when the "buzz" will not increase with more alcohol. In fact, at this point (typically around a BAC of .06), drinking more alcohol is almost guaranteed to lead to a series of negative effects.

Below is a list of ways to help prevent alcohol poisoning.

- Drink no more than one drink per hour
- Eat a full meal shortly before you start drinking
- Drink non-alcoholic drinks between alcoholic drinks to slow the rate of consumption
- Do not mix alcohol with other drugs, legal or illegal
- Do not let others pressure you to drink
- Know your limits and stick to them
- Leave any drinking situation that is out of control before you become involved

Signs and Symptoms of Alcohol Poisoning

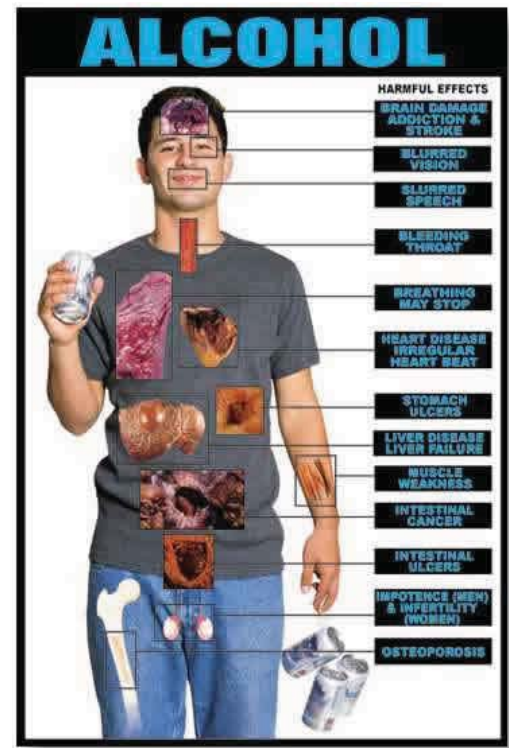
Person is known to have consumed large quantities of alcohol

- Person is unconscious and cannot be awakened
- Person has cold, clammy, unusually pale or bluish skin
- Person is breathing slowly or irregularly, less than 8 times a minute or 10 seconds or more between breaths
- Person vomits while passed out and does not wake up during or after

Steps to Taking Action

1. **Try to wake the person.** Try to wake the person by calling their name, slapping their face, or pinching their skin. See if you can get a reaction that will wake the person up. Remember, just because they wake up doesn't mean they are fine. Alcohol stays in the bloodstream until it is processed and just because you can get some reaction at 1:00 AM doesn't mean they will still be conscious by 2:00 AM. Do not leave the person alone.
2. **Check the person's breathing.** Evaluate if the person has slow or irregular breaths; less than 8 times per minute or more than 10 seconds between breaths. If they are not conscious or barely able to wake up, we need to make sure they don't choke on their own vomit.
3. **Turn the person on his/her side to prevent choking.** If they are not conscious or barely able to wake up, we begin by making sure they don't choke on their vomit. Start by putting their arm above their head. Bend their opposite knee and roll them toward you so that they are laying on their side, preferably their left side. Putting the person on their left side will slow the delivery of alcohol to the small intestine and also allows more air to surface from the right lung. This way, if they do throw up, the vomit will have a better chance of coming out.
4. **Do not leave the person alone.** Although it might be inconvenient, it is important to stay with someone who is extremely drunk and barely conscious. Continue to monitor their breathing, responsiveness, skin and lip color, etc.
5. **If any of signs of alcohol poisoning exist, call 911 or follow your campus emergency procedures, immediately.** Hesitating can mean the difference between life and death.

Stand by your decision. Stand up for your friendship. Do the right thing based on your best judgment and your knowledge of alcohol poisoning. You are **always** doing the right thing by getting help.



Did you know...the following facts about drinking in South Dakota??

- As of August 2005, all states have DUI laws that deem “per se intoxicated” any driver with a blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) at or above .08 percent. This means that drivers with a BAC at or above .08 are intoxicated in the eyes of the law, and no additional proof of driving impairment is necessary.
- All states carry “zero tolerance” laws that target drivers under the legal drinking age. These laws penalize persons under 21 for operating a vehicle with any trace of alcohol in their systems (a BAC above 0.0), or with negligible BAC levels such as .01 or .02 percent.
- The first Underage Consumption of Alcohol conviction will result in the revocation of your driver’s license for 30 days and the court may sentence you to 5 days in jail and/or \$100 in fines and court costs. You will also be required to take 1st Offender Alcohol Classes—in Madison, this class costs \$145. Also, you will be required to remain law-abiding for a period of one year.
- The second Underage Consumption of Alcohol conviction will result in the revocation of your driver’s license for 60 days and the court may sentence you to 5 days in jail and/or \$200 in fines and court costs. You will also be required to take 2nd Offender Alcohol Classes—in Madison, this class costs \$250. Also, you will be required to remain law-abiding for a period of one year.
- The first DUI conviction is a Class 1 misdemeanor and will result in the revocation of your driver’s license for at least 30 days. The court may sentence you to up to one year in jail and/or up to a \$2,000 fine. If your BAC is greater than .17, then the court will require you to undergo an evaluation to determine if the defendant is chemically dependent.
- The second DUI conviction is a Class 1 misdemeanor and will result in the revocation of your driver’s license for at least a year. The court may sentence you to up to one year in jail and/or up to a \$2,000 fine.
- The third DUI conviction is a Class 6 felony and will result in a revocation of your driver’s license for at least a year. The court may sentence you to up to two year in the state penitentiary and a fine of up to \$4,000.
- The fourth and subsequent DUIs are Class 5 felonies and will result in a revocation of your driver’s license for at least two years after your release from prison. The court may sentence you to up to five years in the state penitentiary and a fine of up to \$10,000.
- Whereas the legal BAC limit in South Dakota is 0.08, as long as your BAC is over .05 you can still be charged with DUI if your driving is evidently impaired. Even more so, you do not even have to be actually driving to be charged. For example, sitting in the driver seat with the intent to drive, in addition to being intoxicated, is enough to be found guilty.
- Although this estimate depends on several variables including type of car, previous violations, etc., your car insurance (if they even decide to continue carrying you), will increase to an additional \$500-\$1000 per year. A DUI stays on your record for 3 years. The total insurance increase over a 3 year-period is between \$1500 and \$3000.
- The Dakota State University Alcohol and Other Drug policy is a 3-strike policy set forth by the South Dakota Board of Regent’s. The 3 strikes are counted over a student’s undergraduate career and at DSU, both on-campus AND off-campus violations are counted. A third strike may lead to a suspension from all SD public institutions of higher education.
- In 2008, there were 119 traffic fatalities. 41 of those fatalities were alcohol-related. That is 34% of traffic fatalities in South Dakota that were PREVENTABLE.
- 5 of those alcohol-related fatalities were youth under the age of 21.

Now, ask yourself if these costs are worth one night of drinking...

Sources: 1) <http://www.alcoholalert.com/drunken-driving-statistics-south-dakota.html>
2) <http://dui.findlaw.com/dui/state-dui-law/south-dakota-dui-law.html>
3) <http://www.duianswer.com/library/south-dakota-dui-law.cfm>
4) http://www.legalinfo.com/content/dui-dwi/south-dakota-dwi-_dui-lawyer.html

Upcoming Spring 2010 AOD Events

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|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| February 8-12, 2010 | In recognition of National Condom Month, AOD will sponsor “The Big Bed”
Location: Spectrum Lounge, Time: Continuous |
| February 16, 2010 | In recognition of National Condom Month and Fat Tuesday, AOD will sponsor the Mardi-Gras Bead and Condom Give-Away, Location: Spectrum Lounge, Time: 11am-1pm |
| March 1, 2010 | AOD hosts the 1st Annual Pre-Spring Break Bash, Location: TC Underground, Time: 7 pm |
| March 8-12, 2010 | Spring Break |
| April 6, 2010 | In recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, AOD will sponsor JEOPARDY
Location: Marketplace, Time: 12-1 pm |

Tentative Events

- Impairment Goggle Obstacle Course w/ Guest Speakers from law enforcement, emergency response, etc.
- Possible guest speakers from Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Meth Awareness and Prevention Project of SD, etc.
- Campus-wide Alcohol and Drug Use Survey - Your HONEST responses will provide valuable information for Dakota State University, will be confidential, and participation will enter you into a prize drawing!