

# Quiz: College binge drinking

Despite the efforts of college administrators across the country, binge drinking by students — especially impressionable freshman — continues to grow in popularity each year. And along with these episodes of uncontrolled alcohol consumption have come a number of student injuries and even deaths. What do you know about this serious issue and why students make the choices they do? Take this quiz and find out.



**Dr. Joyce Brothers**

• Ask Dr. Brothers

1. Binge drinking isn't just a problem for alcoholics — many college students who don't consider themselves problem drinkers don't think twice about having four, five or more drinks in a row on a week-end night. TRUE ( ) FALSE ( )
2. The college drinker starts out rather cautiously as a freshman, and by the time he is a senior, his drinking is often much heavier and out of control. Non-college kids of the same age drink the same or more. TRUE ( ) FALSE ( )
3. The death of a student from alcohol poisoning has a profound impact on the drinking habits around a college campus. TRUE ( ) FALSE ( )
4. College students who find a friend who is drunk and passed out should get him or her to a bed so he or she can sleep it off. TRUE ( ) FALSE ( )
5. If students end up in the emergency room due to alcohol-related accidents, immediate counseling can have a long-term effect on reducing heavy drinking. TRUE ( ) FALSE ( )
6. Young women can drink more than men without being as adversely affected, due to the way their bodies metabolize alcohol. TRUE ( ) FALSE ( )

7. Women who don't want to be exposed to higher levels of sexual aggression should stay out of bars in college or drink nonalcoholic beverages. TRUE ( ) FALSE ( )

**ANSWERS:**  
 1. TRUE. More than 40 percent of college students admit to binge drinking, a percentage that has not lowered in the past decade despite a plethora of programs to curtail it. College students report having 12 or more drinks on as many as 20 percent of the occasions on which they drink.  
 2. FALSE. Freshmen tend to start the year off with a bang, giving in to peer pressure and the ready availability of beer, wine and even hard liquor on or off many college campuses. But by the time they are seniors, their drinking seems to become more restrained. Men and women their age who are working instead of going to college routinely drink less, not more, than their peers in institutes of higher education.  
 3. FALSE. Emergency rooms at campuses that have experienced student deaths from drinking report little, if any, slowdown in the number of overdoses in the days and weeks after a tragedy.  
 4. FALSE. Many deaths have occurred when unconscious students vomit and choke because their gag reflex has failed, or they don't wake up. Students who have been left alone and unconscious also can die from alcohol poisoning that

causes them to stop breathing. Anyone who is pale and taking less than eight breaths a minute needs an ambulance, not more sleep.

5. TRUE. A recent study of 600 emergency-department patients who were either counseled or just given a pamphlet showed that identifying and referring heavy drinkers to brief, immediate counseling before leaving the hospital cut both the rate of drinking emergency visits.

6. FALSE. Women have a worse time with alcohol than men, because their higher percentage of body fat means a lower percentage of water in the body with which to dilute the alcohol. This, in combination with generally lower body weight and a lower level of a stomach enzyme that breaks down the alcohol, leads to a higher concentration of alcohol in the blood.

7. TRUE. Although nondrinkers are among the 70,000 cases of sexual assault or date rape each year, college women who drank in a New York study showed a level of sexual aggression nine times higher on heavy drinking days and three times higher than on nondrinking days.

If you answered five or more of the seven questions correctly, you are aware of the facts surrounding college binge drinking and the thinking process — or lack thereof — that goes into the decision to get drunk in college.

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