



How Substances Affect the Body with Diabetes

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Alcohol and Recreational Drug Use

- Many adults with diabetes safely enjoy alcohol and (legal) recreational drug use
- There is a growing body of evidence about alcohol and marijuana use in people with diabetes
- Evidence for other illegal mind-altering substances is minimal





Alcohol

- Liver releases glucose all day
- If processing alcohol, does not give glucose
- Basal insulin/Pump don't get signal to lower insulin
= risk of low blood sugar





Drinking Safely with Diabetes

1. Make sure people know you have diabetes
2. Know your drinks – carbs and proof
3. Eat while you drink
4. Monitor glucose levels





Drinking Safely with Diabetes

5. Prevent lows after

1. Eating food and taking less insulin
2. Reducing basal rate
3. Remember that glucagon may not be effective!





Knowing your Drinks – Proof/Strength

- Not all drinks are created equally
- 60 minutes to process 1 oz of alcohol
 - 5 oz wine
 - 1.5 oz shot of liquor
 - 12 oz beer





Knowing your Drinks – Carbs in the Drinks

- Mixing with Liquor
 - Can choose things like diet soda
- Beer and Wine have carbohydrates
 - Some have more than others – i.e. sweeter wines vs. dry wines



Beverage	Serving Size	Calories	Carbs (g)
Beer			
Regular beer	12 oz	150	12
Light beer	12 oz	100	5
Non-alcoholic beer	12 oz	60	12
Wine			
Champagne	4 oz	100	4
Sweet wine	5 oz	130	6
Dry White, Red, Rose	5 oz	100	trace
Sweet kosher wine	5 oz	165	15
Wine cooler	12 oz	215	30
Appetizer/Dessert Wines			
Sherry	2 oz	74	2
Sweet Sherry, Port	2 oz	90	7
Cordials, Liqueurs	1 ½ oz	160	18
80-proof Gin, Rum, Vodka, Whiskey, Scotch	1 ½ oz	100	trace
Dry Brandy, Cognac	1 oz	75	trace
Cocktails			
Bloody Mary	8 oz	130	9
Daiquiri	8 oz	240	32

Beverage	Serving Size	Calories	Carbs (g)
Gin and Tonic	6 oz	174	11
Margarita	8 oz	240	36
Martini	2 ½ oz	156	trace
Pina Colada	8 oz	436	56
Tom Collins	8 oz	120	3
Whiskey Sour	4 oz	186	16
Shooters			
Amaretto Sour	1 ½ oz	118	19
Fuzzy Navel	1 ½ oz	120	7
Kamikazi	1 ½ oz	150	2
Mud Slide	1 ½ oz	160	17
Turbo	1 ½ oz	110	3
Mixers			
Non-caloric mixers (mineral water, sugar-free tonic, club soda, diet soda)	any	0	0
Tonic water	4 oz	41	11
Tomato juice (Bloody Mary mix)	4 oz	25	5
Juice (orange, grapefruit, pineapple)	4 oz	60	15





Taking Advantage of Alcohol

- Pairing wine with higher carbohydrate meals such as pizza, pasta, etc.
- Effectively an extended bolus effect (for some)
- Ability to reduce the mealtime bolus when consuming alcohol





Everyone is Different

- Diabetes is a science experiment
- $A + B$ does not always = C
- Determine how your body reacts to different types of alcoholic beverages and make adjustments as needed
- Oh, and by the way, it may change over time
 - Thanks, Diabetes (middle finger emoji)



Marijuana (THC)

- Legalized in many parts of the U.S. now
- The drug itself does not cause changes in blood glucose levels
- Possible Bright Side:
 - No risk for hypoglycemia like alcohol



Marijuana (THC)

- Challenges:
 - The Munchies
 - Cannabis Hyperemesis Syndrome
 - Increased risk for DKA per T1D Exchange data





Psychedelic Mushrooms (Psilocybin)

- Legalized in some parts of the U.S.
- No research on the effects on diabetes or blood glucose
 - If someone is not in their normal mental state, managing blood glucose may be challenging or the person may forget to address glycemic changes





Psychedelic Mushrooms (Psilocybin)

- Increasingly used in mental health treatments
 - Substance abuse disorder
 - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
 - Depressive disorders
 - Still experimental and supervised by medical professionals in many cases



Other Illicit Drugs

- Cocaine has shown to increase the risk of DKA in one study in NYC
- One case study of a 19-year-old who went into DKA after MDMA use
- Not nearly enough research
- If you cannot care for yourself, who will manage your diabetes?





Tobacco

- Increased risk of cardiovascular disease, amputation, and erectile dysfunction
- Can cause high blood sugars due to abnormal secretion of cortisol + growth hormone
- Vaping risk – recalls, inhalation risks, etc.





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Thank you!

