Doctors for Road Safety

Just Don't

Drink driving regulations have become stricter.
Know your limits...don't drink and drive.

50 mg/dl — *Normal Vehicles*

Probationary Drivers & Commercial Vehicles — **20** mg/dl

0 mg/dl — *Bus, Coach & Passenger Carrying Vehicles*

Driving & Drinking Alcohol

Q What is 'BAC'?

A

'BAC' is the **blood alcohol concentration** or the amount of alcohol in a person's body (measured in grams of alcohol per deciliter of blood). Alcohol is absorbed directly through the walls of the stomach and the small intestine, goes into the bloodstream, and travels throughout the body and to the brain. Alcohol is quickly absorbed and can be measured within 30 to 70 minutes after a person has had a drink.

Q What factors affect my BAC?

A

How fast your BAC rises depends on:

- The **number** of drinks: the more you drink, the higher your BAC
- How **fast** you drink: when alcohol is consumed quickly, you will reach a higher BAC than when it is consumed over a longer period of time
- Your body **weight**: The more you weigh, the more water is present in your body. This water dilutes the alcohol and lowers the BAC
- **Gender**: women generally have less water and more body fat per kg of body weight than men. Alcohol does not go into fat cells as easily as other cells, so more alcohol remains in the blood of women
- **Food** in the stomach: absorption into the body and blood will be slower if you've had something to eat
- **Medication or drugs:** although they may not affect your BAC, some drugs when taken with alcohol may impair your driving even more

Q

How may alcohol affect my behaviour?

A

The effects of alcohol in the body depend on the level:

BAC	Typical effects	Predicable effects which will IMPAIR driving
20 mg/dl	• Some loss of judgment • Relaxation • Slight body warmth Altered mood	• Decline in visual functions (rapid tracking of a moving target) • Decline in ability to perform two tasks at the same time (divided attention)
50 mg/dl	• Exaggerated behavior • May have loss of small-muscle control (e.g., focusing your eyes) • Impaired judgment • Usually good feeling • Lowered alertness • Release of inhibition	• Reduced coordination • Reduced ability to track moving objects • Difficulty steering • Reduced response to emergency driving situations
80 mg/dl	• Muscle coordination becomes poor (e.g., balance, speech, vision, reaction time, and hearing) • Harder to detect danger • Impaired judgment, self-control, reasoning, and memory	• Loss of concentration • Short-term memory loss • Speed control • Reduced information processing capability • Impaired perception
100 mg/dl	• Clear deterioration of reaction time and control • Slurred speech, poor coordination, and slowed thinking	• Reduced ability to maintain lane position and brake appropriately
150 mg/dl	• Far less muscle control than normal • Vomiting may occur • Significant loss of balance	• Substantial impairment in vehicle control, attention to driving task, and in necessary visual and auditory information processing

Q Is there a safe number of drinks to have if I am going to drink and drive?

A

The absolute safe amount of alcohol to consume if you are driving is **ZERO DRINKS**. The below tables (which show the **approximate** alcohol level in the blood after drinking alcohol, depending on your body weight) indicate that **even after a drink or two, your driving skills may be impaired and you may even be criminally liable**.

MALE: Approximate Blood Alcohol Concentration – BAC (mg/dl)									
Body Weight	45	54	64	73	82	91	100	109	Kg
0 drinks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	SAFE
1 drink	40	30	30	20	20	20	20	20	IMPAIRED
2 drinks	80	60	50	50	40	40	30	30	UNSAFE !
3 drinks	110	90	80	70	60	60	50	50	
4 drinks	150	120	110	90	80	80	70	60	Criminal Penalties
5 drinks	190	160	130	120	110	90	90	80	
Subtract 10mg/dl for each 40 minutes elapsed since starting drinking									

FEMALE: Approximate Blood Alcohol Concentration – BAC (mg/dl)									
Body Weight	45	54	64	73	82	91	100	109	Kg
0 drinks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	SAFE
1 drink	50	40	30	30	30	20	20	20	IMPAIRED
2 drinks	90	80	70	60	50	50	40	40	UNSAFE !
3 drinks	140	110	110	90	80	70	60	60	
4 drinks	180	150	130	110	110	90	80	80	Criminal Penalties
5 drinks	230	190	160	140	130	110	110	90	
Subtract 10mg/dl for each 40 minutes elapsed since starting drinking									

Disclaimer: These are average values. It is not possible to know the BAC exactly in each case because of the various factors described above. Thus use these charts with caution or if necessary seek appropriate help.

Based on: **1 drink** = **350 ml beer** (5% alcohol) = **235 ml strong beer** (7% alcohol) = **150 ml wine** (12% alcohol) = **45 ml spirits - 1 shot** (40% alcohol)

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So if you want to be safe and sure,
Just Don't Drink and Drive.

Malta Traffic Regulations Ordinance (Chapter 65) Art 15 amended XIV. 2017.5; The ABCs of BAC, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2005; St. John's University Minnesota Understanding Blood Alcohol Content

#DrivingRoadSafety