

## PROCEED WITH CAUTION

### Mixing medications & alcohol – potential harms

Drinking alcohol while taking certain medications can lead to harmful side effects, such as digestive issues, headaches, loss of coordination, as well as increasing the risk of cardiovascular problems. Alcohol also reduces the effectiveness of some medications and can make certain medications more toxic to the body. The potential for harmful interactions varies by type of medication, age and sex of the patient, and the amount of alcohol consumed.

## PRESCRIPTION & OVER THE COUNTER

### Commonly used medications that interact with alcohol

Medications are shown by: **What they are used to treat**, (Type of medication), and *Brand name and/or generic name*.

- **Allergies** (Antihistamines): *Benadryl, Claritin, Sudafed Sinus & Allergy, Zyrtec*
- **Angina and Coronary Heart Disease**: *Isordil*
- **Anxiety** (Benzodiazepines): *Ativan, Klonopin, Valium, Xanax*
- **Arthritis** (Cox-2 Inhibitors): *Celebrex, Naprosyn, Voltaren*
- **ADHD** (Stimulants): *Adderall, Ritalin, Vyvanse*
- **Blood clots**: *Warfarin*
- **Cough**: *Robitussin Cough*
- **Depression** (SSRIs, SNRIs and MAOIs): *Abilify, Effexor, Lexapro, Prozac, Zoloft*
- **Diabetes** (Biguanides, Sulfonylureas): *Diabeta, Glucotrol, Glynase, Metformin, Micronase*
- **Enlarged prostate** (Alpha Blockers): *Cardura, Flomax, Hytrin, Minipress*
- **Heartburn, indigestion** (H-2 Blockers): *Axid, Reglan, Tagamet, Zantac*
- **High blood pressure** (Beta Blockers, Calcium Channel Blockers, ACE Inhibitors): *Avapro, Lotensin, Metoprolol, Norvasc, Prinivil, Vasotec*
- **High cholesterol** (Statins): *Crestor, Lipitor, Pravachol, Vytorin, Zocor*
- **Infections** (Antibiotics): *Flagyl, Nydravid, Zithomax*
- **Mood stabilizers**: *Depakene, Depakote, Lithium,*
- **Muscle pain**: *Flexeril, Soma*
- **Nausea** (Antiemetics/Antihistamines): *Antivert, Dramamine, Phenergan*
- **Pain and inflammation** (NSAIDs, Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen): *Advil, Aleve, Excedrin, Motrin, Tylenol*
- **Seizures** (Anticonvulsants): *Gabapentin, Levetiracetam, Phenytoin, Topiramate*
- **Severe pain** (Opioids): *Hydrocodone, Mepredine, Oxycodone, Propoxyphene*
- **Sleep problems** (Sedatives, Hypnotics): *Ambien, Lunesta, Unisom*



### Other things to consider

- Medicines may contain many ingredients, and several may interact with alcohol
- Certain medicines contain alcohol – up to 10 percent in some
- Alcohol affects women differently than men at the same levels of consumption
- The risk of harmful interactions is greater for older people
- Medicines and alcohol can interact harmfully even if taken at different times

### For more information

A pamphlet with detailed information is available at the National Institutes of Health webpage on harmful interactions:

[https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/NIAAA\\_Harmful\\_Interactions\\_English.pdf](https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/NIAAA_Harmful_Interactions_English.pdf)

