

Alcohol Emergency Warning Signs & Steps

Listed below are some of the signs of possible alcohol poisoning and the steps to take. If you're unsure of how to help - *don't waste time* - get medical help.

Signs

If the person is unconscious, semi-conscious, or unresponsive, check for these symptoms of alcohol or drug overdose:

- **C**old, clammy skin
- **U**nconsciousness
- **S**lowed or irregular breathing
- **P**uking, particularly while passed out

If ANY of these signs are evident, call for emergency medical help immediately. **Call 911**. From cell phone: (510) 642-3333 (UC Police) or (510) 981-5911 (Berkeley Police).

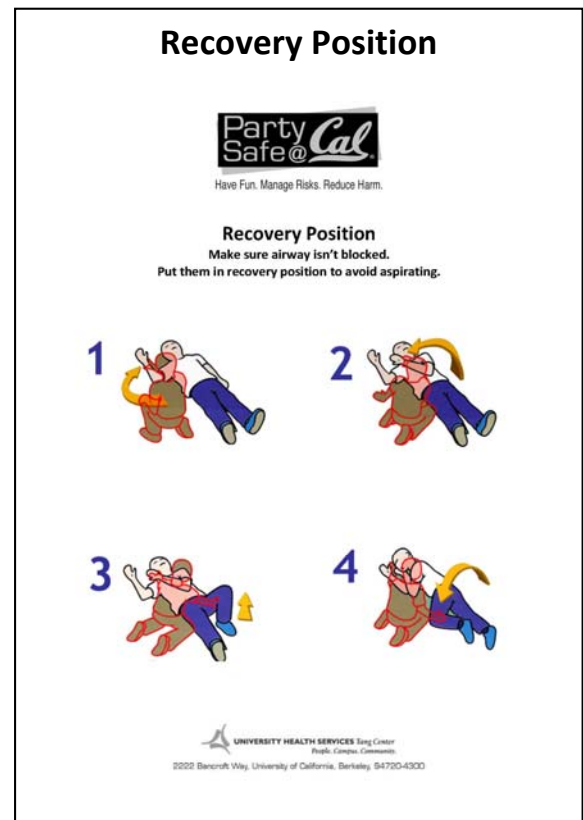
Steps

- Make health and safety the #1 priority.
- Stay with person.
- Put them in the recovery position (right) to prevent choking on their own vomit.
- Cooperate and don't obstruct police and emergency services. When Police or Emergency Services arrive at your event, host and security managers should:
 - Control the crowd and ensure access to person;
 - Assist to ensure patient has ID, phone, keys, cash and emergency contact information on them;
 - Communicate what and how much was consumed, where it came from and if they've vomited; and
 - Offer to accompany or pick up when released.

Consequences of Untreated Alcohol Poisoning

- Person chokes on his or her own vomit
- Breathing slows, becomes irregular, or stops
- Heart beats irregularly or stops
- Hypothermia (low body temperature)
- Hypoglycemia (too little blood sugar) leads to seizures
- Untreated severe dehydration from vomiting can cause seizures, permanent brain damage or death
- Even if the person lives, an alcohol overdose can lead to irreversible brain damage. Rapid binge drinking is especially dangerous because the person can ingest a fatal dose before becoming unconscious.

Don't hesitate to seek medical help for a friend who has had too much to drink. Don't worry that your friend may become angry or embarrassed - bottom line is that you cared enough to help. Always be safe, not sorry.



If they are conscious and responsive:

- Stay with them. Don't leave them to "sleep it off." A person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) can continue to rise even while he or she is passed out. Even after a person stops drinking, alcohol in the stomach and intestine continues to enter the bloodstream and circulate throughout the body. It is dangerous to assume the person will be fine by sleeping it off.
- Check them often. Make certain that they stay in the recovery position (previous page).
- Remain calm, kind and firm. Before you touch them, tell them exactly what you are going to do. Do not ridicule, judge, threaten, or try to counsel them. Avoid communicating feelings of anxiety or anger.
- Keep them quiet and comfortable and still to avoid injury. No walking or standing without assistance. If they are in the sun, move them to the shade. If cold, move them to a warm place and offer a blanket. Do not let them leave or drive if they may cause harm to self or others.
- No food, drink or medication if they've vomited in the last 2 hours - it can cause vomiting or choking.
- Remember that only time will sober up a drunk person. Walking, showering, or drinking coffee will not help and may actually cause harm.
- Be aware of any signs of aggression or injury. If injured, violent, unruly or need transportation - call UCPD (510) 642-3333.

After a hospital transport

You may be confused or upset about being in the hospital because of alcohol or other drugs, or may be wondering what happened. You are not alone!

- Consider contacting someone you trust to be with you at the hospital or after you are discharged.
- If you don't remember what led up to being admitted to the hospital, consider asking your friends, roommates, building-mates or resident advisor. Also, you may request a copy of the ambulance transport report, your hospital medical record or your local police department report.
- You will be responsible for some costs (e.g. ambulance, hospital, physician's services, etc.). Do give the hospital your contact information and insurance information. If you receive bills later, contact your insurance company to discuss payment – they may be able to help with installment plans. Also, you can contact the Financial Aid Office to determine if you are eligible for loan adjustments for medical expenses.
- Your parents may learn about this if they were called as your emergency contact from your place of residence or if they receive any insurance-related billing statements at their home. You can contact your insurance company to request that any correspondence come to your local address.
- UC Berkeley may learn about this if you were transported from Cal property (e.g. residence hall) or if the police submitted information to the Center for Student Conduct. Do look for email correspondence from the campus over the next few months. For questions regarding the student conduct process, contact (510) 643-9069 or studentconduct@berkeley.edu.
- You may have legal consequences. You can contact your local police department or the Attorney for Students (Mark Lucia, (510) 642-3916) for more information or advice.
- Do read and complete the hospital discharge instructions and request copies that you can bring home with you.
- Make sure you have a plan to get home safely. Call a trusted person for a ride, take the 1 or 1R bus, Uber/taxi, etc.
- You may want to talk with someone about what this means for your life and how you make future choices about using alcohol or other drugs. Social Services offers confidential counseling and support to help you explore ways to minimize harm associated with alcohol and other drug use. Call (510) 642-6074 to set up an appointment.
- If you believe you may have been sexually assaulted, please visit <http://survivorsupport.berkeley.edu/home> for information and resources, including counseling support with a specialist at Social Services at (510) 642-6074.

For more information, contact partysafe@berkeley.edu or (510) 643-9073.