Alcohol is a chemical in beer, wine, or liquor. It can also be an ingredient in some products like mouthwash and cologne. When swallowed, it gets into the blood quickly and then throughout the entire body. Alcohol acts as a depressant on the central nervous system. When people drink alcohol, they increase the risk of injuring themselves or others. An estimated 6 people per day die from alcohol poisoning.¹

SYMPTOMS OF ALCOHOL OVERDOSE MIGHT INCLUDE:

- Slowed reaction time
- Mental confusion
- Unsteady balance & poor coordination
- Sleepiness, unconsciousness, or “passing out”
- Slowed or irregular breathing
- Lowered body temperature
- Vomiting
- Choking
- Seizures, coma, and death
- Alcohol use by pregnant women can cause harm to the baby.

ALSO GOOD TO KNOW:

In addition to physical symptoms, alcohol use can cause poor judgment and reckless behavior, which can lead to accidents of all kinds and puts the drinker at greater risk for becoming a victim of crime or assault.

Some medications can increase the effect of alcohol on the body.

In general, one average can or bottle of beer, one 5 oz. glass of wine, and 1.5 oz. of hard liquor all contain the same amount of alcohol. Each are considered one serving.

BE SAFE. The Blue Ridge Poison Center encourages you to make smart and responsible drinking decisions.

- **Alternate** alcoholic beverages with non-alcoholic beverages.
- **Eat** before and while consuming alcohol.
- **Know what you’re drinking.** Some mixed drinks have more than one serving of alcohol in them.
- **Don’t accept** drinks from strangers or leave a drink unattended.
- **Use designated drivers** who stay sober.
- **Check the labels** on all your medicines to make sure it is safe to combine them with alcohol.

NOTE: Even a small amount of alcohol can be life-threatening for a child. Always keep an eye on alcoholic beverages when children are present. Store alcohol UP & AWAY, out of their sight and reach.

WHAT IF SOMEONE OVERDOSES ON ALCOHOL?

If you are worried that someone has had too much alcohol, don’t let them drive a car. Take steps to make sure they do not become the victim of a crime, and help them get home safe.

Never leave an intoxicated person alone to “sleep it off.” They are in danger of choking, seizures, coma, and death. If someone is having a seizure, is pale or turning blue, or will not wake up, call for medical help right away. Roll them onto their side while waiting for help to arrive.

Call for help even if you are worried that the intoxicated person may become angry, embarrassed, or that someone may get into trouble. **You could save their life.** If you are unsure about what to do, the Blue Ridge Poison Center can help: 1-800-222-1222.

For help with any suspected poisoning or overdose. 1-800-222-1222 or www.poisonhelp.org. Fast, free, private.

The Blue Ridge Poison Center at the University of Virginia Health System has been proudly serving Virginia since 1978. Visit our website for flyers, poisoning prevention news, tips, and more: www.brpc.virginia.edu. Please share this flyer!