

Each year, approximately 5,000 young people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking; this includes about 1,900 deaths from motor vehicle crashes, 1,600 as a result of homicides, 300 from suicide, as well as hundreds from other injuries such as falls, burns, and drownings (1–5).

([ubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/AA67/AA67.htm](https://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/AA67/AA67.htm))

- + 1900 Death motor vehicle crash**
- + 1600 Homicide**
- + 300 Suicide**
- + 1200 Other injuries (falls, burns, drownings, etc)**

What if you don't die in a car crash, kill someone or be killed by your drinking buddies, commit suicide when your judgement is impaired, or become permanently disfigured by a burn or fall? If you are somehow lucky enough to miss these consequences what is happening inside your body?

Here are how each body system is affected:

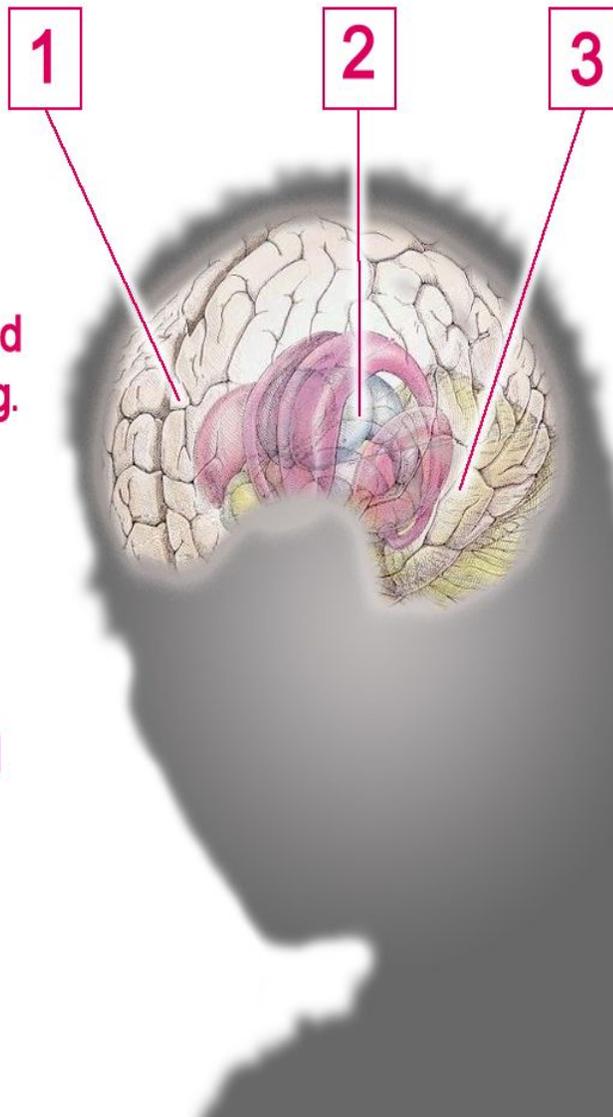
Brain

HOW ALCOHOL ATTACKS THE BRAIN

A guide to the sequential damage alcohol inflicts on neural tissue

1. First, alcohol affects the forebrain and **assaults motor coordination and decision making.**

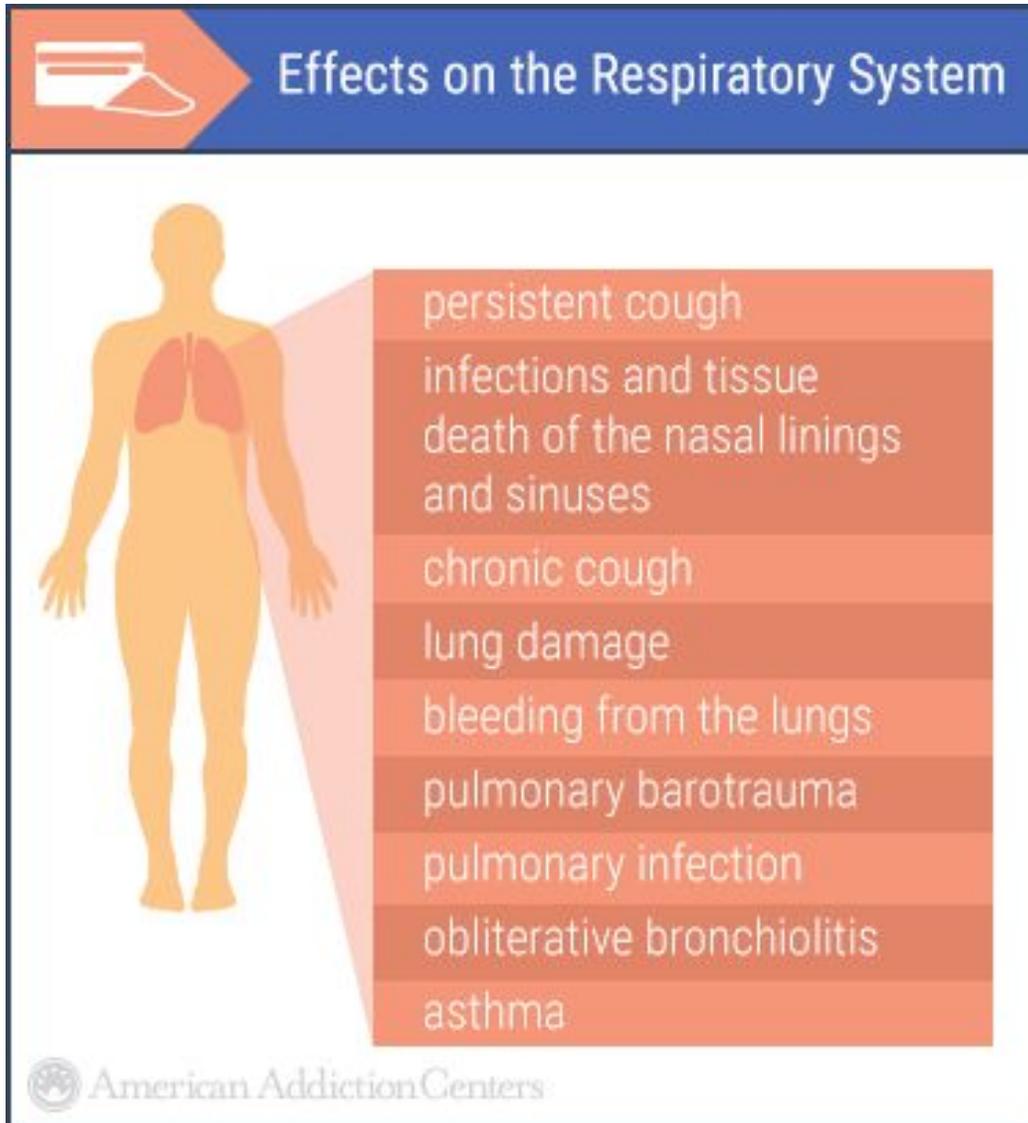
2. Then, alcohol knocks out the midbrain, and you **lose control over emotions and increase chances of a blackout.**



3. Finally, alcohol batters the brainstem as it **affects heart rate, body temperature, appetite and consciousness,** a dangerous and potentially fatal condition.

Note the part of the brain that is our last defense against damage from binge drinking is the Brain Stem. Prior to organ donation, a person is checked for Brain Stem reflexes since this is the last part of our brain we need to be considered alive. Without Brain stem reflexes a person is declared Brain Dead and their organs can be harvested and donated to living donors with organ damage.

Lungs:



If you have ever fallen and “had the wind knocked out of you”, that is similar to what an asthma attack feels like. Another description I have heard patients use is “it feels like trying to breath through a straw”. Once

you have significant lung damage this feeling becomes permanent and can only be fixed with a lung transplant.

Liver

ALCOHOLIC HEPATITIS SYMPTOMS AND COMPLICATIONS

The more liver damage there is, the more these symptoms will be experienced:

- A loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea
- Nausea/vomiting
- Dry mouth
- Fever



THE LIVER
CAN ONLY HANDLE
a certain amount of
ALCOHOL
AT ANY GIVEN TIME



- Jaundice or icterus which is **the yellowing of skin or eyes**
- Negative changes in mental state, including confusion

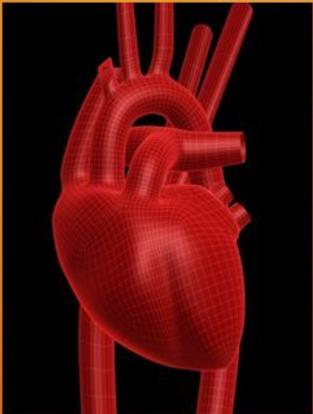
Liver damage causes a constant feeling of being tired and sick to your stomach. It can also turn your skin and the white of your eyes yellow, once there is enough damage to change your skin color other things start to happen like coughing up blood when you eat and having uncontrolled bloody diarrhea.

Heart:

Back

Effects of Alcohol on the Heart

- Stroke
- Change in heartbeat – rapid or irregular
- Arrhythmias
- High blood pressure
- Alcoholic cardiomyopathy – weakening of the heart muscle which causes shortness of breath, fatigue, swelling of the legs and feet, and irregular heartbeat.



Once alcohol has done enough damage to weaken the muscles of your heart Every Other Organ in your body begins to stop working. This muscle supplies every single functioning component of your body with oxygen rich blood and pulls the blood that has had all the oxygen depleted back to the lungs for more.