



LESSON 1 **Alcohol and You**



LESSON 2 **Alcohol and Its Effects**



LESSON 3 **Other Drugs' Effect on Driving Ability**



LESSON 4 **Preventing Impaired Driving**

What Are the Effects of Peer Pressure?

Most young people are vulnerable to peer pressure, which is often harmless. However, peer pressure can influence you in ways that can damage you and your future, such as influencing you to experiment with drinking alcohol or even using or misusing other drugs. Understanding how the use of alcohol and other drugs can be destructive can help you resist negative peer pressure. This will reduce the risks of impaired driving, which leads to too many accidents.

Driver Ed *Online*



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- ◆ Web Link Exercises
- ◆ eFlashcards
- ◆ Practice Driving Tests





Alcohol and You

OBJECTIVES

1. **Describe** the three major categories of alcoholic drinking.
2. **List** factors that influence the effects of alcohol on the body.

KEY TERM

- ◆ Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

Alcohol is a potentially dangerous drug, but it is very much a part of society. There is a great deal of drinking of alcoholic beverages by people of all ages, and alcoholic products are constantly advertised on TV and in magazines and newspapers. This pervasiveness is demonstrated by the way the word *drink* is often used to mean “drink alcohol.” For example, “I drink too much.” Or “I don’t drink anymore.” Advertising sells alcohol as a desirable, acceptable, and even a romantic drink. Unfortunately, most people have a limited or inaccurate knowledge of the effects of alcohol. Alcohol can be used recreationally or abused, and its effects are not predictable. There are many misconceptions about alcohol. Often people do not realize how badly they might drive after even a few drinks.

What Are the Types of Alcohol Use?

All drinking increases the amount of alcohol in a person’s blood, called **Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)**. BAC determines the intensity of the effects a person feels from drinking. But people also drink in different ways. Experimentation, recreational drinking, and alcohol abuse are three major categories of alcoholic drinking to consider.

EXPERIMENTATION

At some time during their lives, most young people in the United States experiment with drinking. People are naturally curious. How much a person may try to drink, and how often, varies from person to person. Since the effects of alcohol are not predictable, particularly in the beginning, this experimentation carries some risk. Many young people do things they would not normally do after they have been drinking. Research has found that the earlier young people begin to drink alcohol, the more likely they are to become an alcohol abuser or alcoholic. For instance, young people who start to drink before age 15 are four times more likely to become alcoholics than those who begin drinking at age 21. The risk of alcoholism decreases by about 14 percent for each year a young person waits to begin drinking.

SAFETY TIP

Resist peer pressure to drink alcohol. Pick friends who share your values and who choose abstinence from alcohol and *other drugs*.

RECREATIONAL DRINKING

Drinking alcohol for recreation means drinking for what one thinks is fun. A drink or two can help many people think they feel relaxed in social situations, especially if they don’t drink to excess. Many people think they feel comfortable after a drink or two, but it is not a substitute for the pleasures of living or for normal social activities. Once the effects of a drug such as alcohol are known, some young people find it easy to seek the artificial mood change instead of

naturally changing the way one feels by doing more appropriate activities, such as sports, socializing, or even talking about problems.

ALCOHOL ABUSE

Alcohol is probably the most abused drug in the United States. The definition of *abusive drinking* or *drug abuse* is the definition of the word *abuse*. To abuse a drug means the “wrong, improper or abnormal use” of that drug, whether it’s alcohol or any other drug. Therefore, any drinking for persons under the legal drinking age can be termed *abusive* since the activity is clearly illegal, physically harmful, and is more likely to establish a lifelong pattern of problem drinking. Thus, if young people who are underage use alcohol, it is considered abusive drinking, or alcohol abuse. For people of the legal age to drink, alcohol abuse usually means drinking to excess or drinking very frequently.

Other examples of alcohol abuse include:

- Drinking to become intoxicated or get drunk
- Drinking when driving, or driving while intoxicated
- Drinking to relieve stress
- Drinking to change a feeling, mood, or social situation
- Gulping drinks

What Factors Contribute to the Effects of Alcohol?

All people are affected by alcohol. Drinking too much of any beverage containing alcohol will get a person drunk. However, no two humans are exactly the same. This means that two people who drink the same amount may experience effects that are very different. In addition, the effects on a particular person at a particular time differ for a number of reasons. These factors include:

- 1. Expectations:** If a person believes one kind of alcoholic beverage will produce a greater effect than another, it probably will, even if the BAC is the same.
- 2. Mood:** Anger, depression, and excitement before drinking may all contribute to different effects.
- 3. Fatigue:** Since alcohol is a depressant, being tired can affect how you react to alcohol.
- 4. Existing medications or medical sensitivities:** Many medications react with alcohol, and some people may be more sensitive than others and have serious drug interactions.

TEN MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DRINKING

The public receives a great deal of incorrect information about alcohol. While some of this has been done to make these ideas easy to remember and a couple of these ideas are true in some cases and untrue in others, it is still bad or incomplete information. It is always better to know the whole truth.

Ten of the worst misconceptions about alcohol follow. The first two are the most common. Misconceptions include:

1. All drinks are equal in alcohol content.

Fact: This is true only sometimes. For instance, coolers are popular alcoholic drinks for some young people. A cooler may have 50 percent more alcohol

FYI

The body can't eliminate much more than 1/2 ounce of alcohol in an hour. It will take about 2 hours for the body to get rid of a standard-sized drink. This figure will vary, however, depending on the gender, weight, and size of the person.

content than a 1-ounce shot of whiskey. When a 12-ounce can or bottle of regular beer is compared to a 1-ounce shot of 80-proof whiskey (1/2 of the proof = alcohol percentage), the beer actually has 35 percent more alcohol. This knowledge is important for at least two reasons:

- a. For a person drinking beer, the more a person drinks, the wider the gap becomes.
- b. About 80 percent of persons charged with DWI or DUI were drinking beer prior to their arrest.

The most important concept to remember is that both the size of the drink (ounces) and strength of the drink (percentage of alcohol) have to be known before any meaningful comparison can be made. No matter how big the glass, more alcohol means a stronger drink, with stronger effects.

2. The human body removes one drink per hour.

Fact: This is only true for some people. Alcohol does eventually pass out of your body, but it is a dangerous concept that the human body can always remove one drink per hour. Even if standard drink sizes are used, this removal rate is true only for very obese or very large people. The truth is that the average elimination rate is .015 percent per hour: if one drink raised your BAC to .015 percent, the BAC would be zero after one hour. However, one regular beer for a 120-pound female will raise her BAC up to .03 percent, so only one-half of the alcohol will have been removed in one hour (.03 percent – .015 percent = .015 percent). And for a male weighing 150 pounds, one beer will produce a maximum BAC of .027 percent, so he will still have alcohol in his system after one hour (.027 percent – .015 percent = .012 percent).

If these levels seem very small, consider what happens when a person continues drinking at this pace. The 120-pound female will be at an unsafe driving level in a little over 3 hours and an illegal driving level (.08 percent) in just over 5 hours. For the 150-pound male to reach each of these levels, it takes 4 and 7 hours, respectively. When the drinking rate exceeds the elimination rate, BAC rises, your ability to drive is impaired, and you eventually get drunk.

3. Males and females handle alcohol the same.

Fact: Not true. It is harder for females to handle alcohol because females have much less of an enzyme called *alcohol dehydrogenase* in their stomach than males. Since this enzyme breaks down alcohol, females absorb more alcohol into their bloodstream than males do. Females also tend to have more body fat than males, another factor in blood alcohol concentration.

4. Beer is not as intoxicating as hard liquor.

Fact: Not true. While there is more alcohol in an ounce of liquor than in an ounce of beer, beer contains enough alcohol to intoxicate you.

5. You cannot get drunk on a full stomach.

Fact: A full stomach does mean the alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream a little more slowly. However, all of that alcohol will still get into the bloodstream and travel to the brain and other parts of the body.

6. Impaired (drinking) driving is not dangerous.

Fact: Not true. Motor-vehicle crashes are the number-one killer of teens. Motor-vehicle crashes kill more 16- to 20-year-olds each year than homicide, suicide, cancer, accidental poisoning, and heart disease combined.

Driver Ed Online

Topic: Myths about alcohol

For a link to more information on myths about alcohol, go to drivered.glencoe.com.

Activity: After reviewing the information provided at this link, create your own list of myths about alcohol based on information you have heard from friends or classmates. Then create a list of facts to dispute these myths.



7. You must drink because your friends want you to, even if you are the driver.

Fact: Real friends would not want you to hurt yourself or others. Resist peer pressure in this dangerous situation. Tell your friends the facts about alcohol.

8. Black coffee, a cold shower, lots of exercise, or all three together can quickly sober up a drinker.

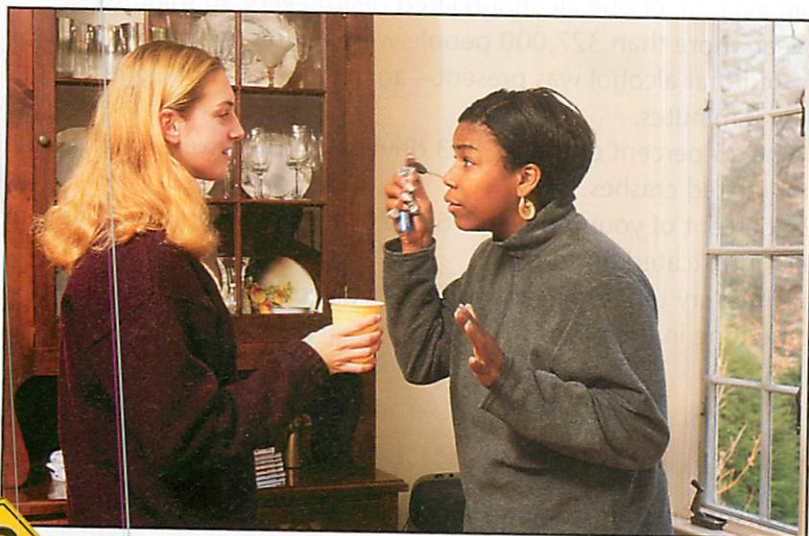
Fact: Not true. The body cannot burn much more than ½-ounce of alcohol in an hour. Nothing can really speed up the process.

9. Alcohol makes you feel better when you are depressed.

Fact: Alcohol is a depressant, or “downer.” Even if it lifts you up for a minute, it may leave you feeling worse than before.

10. Sometimes, because of peer pressure at a party, there is no other choice but to drink.

Fact: You do have a choice. You do not have to drink alcohol—you can drink something else. Abstinence is the only responsible action for anyone under 21.



WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

You and a friend are offered a drink. You say no, but your friend wants to try one. What will you say to your friend?

Lesson 1 Review

- 1 What are the different types of alcohol use?
- 2 What are the two most common misconceptions about alcohol use?
- 3 What factors can contribute to the effects of alcohol?



Alcohol and Its Effects

OBJECTIVES

1. **Explain** the effects of alcohol on your driving.
2. **Describe** how alcohol affects your vision.

KEY TERMS

- ◆ static vision
- ◆ dynamic vision

Alcohol is the deadliest drug in the world when its effects on drivers are considered. Drinking and drunkenness contribute to accidents of all kinds, including those involving motor vehicles, water, recreation, fires, hunting, falls, and more. Alcohol abuse also causes many problems for individuals and society.

Does Alcohol Really Cause Accidents?

The case against drinking and driving is very easily proved. The available statistics tell a terrible story of alcohol-related crashes, deaths, and injuries.

- The 17,419 people who died in alcohol-related crashes during 2002 represent an average of one alcohol-related death every 30 minutes.
- The same year, more than 327,000 people were injured in crashes where police reported that alcohol was present—an average of about one person injured every 2 minutes.
- In 2002, some 25 percent of the 57,803 drivers surveyed were involved in fatal alcohol-related crashes.
- In 2002, 24 percent of young drivers 16 to 20 years old who were killed in crashes were intoxicated or drunk.
- About three in every ten Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their lives.

How Does Alcohol Affect Driving Ability?

Research has shown that drinking alcohol has many adverse effects on driving ability, even at low blood-alcohol concentrations. Other research has shown that all drivers, and particularly young drivers, are at a greatly increased risk of dying as their BAC rises. No matter how good a driver you are, alcohol will decrease your skill and it will damage your judgment behind the wheel.

Being a good driver takes skill and judgment. When you are behind the wheel of a motor vehicle, all of your senses must be on alert. You need to react quickly to potentially threatening conditions and make split-second decisions. As a driver, you must perform many tasks. The ability to divide your attention among these tasks is critical. Even without alcohol, driving can be difficult. This difficulty is increased with even very low levels of alcohol.

One drink of alcohol causes rapid changes in the body because alcohol is absorbed faster than food. As soon as you drink, alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream through the walls of the stomach and small intestine. Once in the bloodstream, alcohol is quickly carried to all parts of the body. Alcohol has the greatest effect on the brain, the organ that controls all body functions. That is why any drinker's mental and physical abilities become diminished.



Tips for New Drivers

DRINKING AND DRIVING

Keep in mind that people under the age of 21 who drink and drive are breaking not just one but two laws. They are breaking the law against driving while intoxicated and the law against underage drinking. If caught drinking and driving, underage drivers face severe penalties, including suspension of driver's licenses, fines, and possible jail time. Don't take chances—play it safe and smart by choosing not to drink alcohol.

The ability to process information after you receive it is vital. Alcohol interferes with the brain's ability to use information to make good decisions. If you are drinking, you might miss the meaning of a particular sign or lane marking, for example, or not see it at all. Something as simple as maintaining your position in a lane is more difficult since alcohol affects fine-muscle control. Under the influence of alcohol, your steering can become erratic and result in a crash.

Numerous experiments involving drivers who were tested both sober and at various BAC levels have demonstrated information-processing losses even at low BAC levels. Small amounts of drinking affect you. While drivers who have been drinking a little may be able to cope with simple tasks such as weaving between cones, they are unable to successfully handle more complex or emergency situations such as pulling out of skids or sudden lane changes. The risk of being in a fatal crash or dying as a driver in a fatal crash rises rapidly as BAC increases.

It is a misconception that alcohol makes you safer in the event of a crash because your body is limber. The chance of dying as a driver in a crash is much greater for drivers who have been drinking than for sober drivers. Reasons for this include:

- Drinkers often fail to wear safety belts.
- Medical attention becomes more difficult for intoxicated persons.

How Is Your Body Affected by Alcohol?

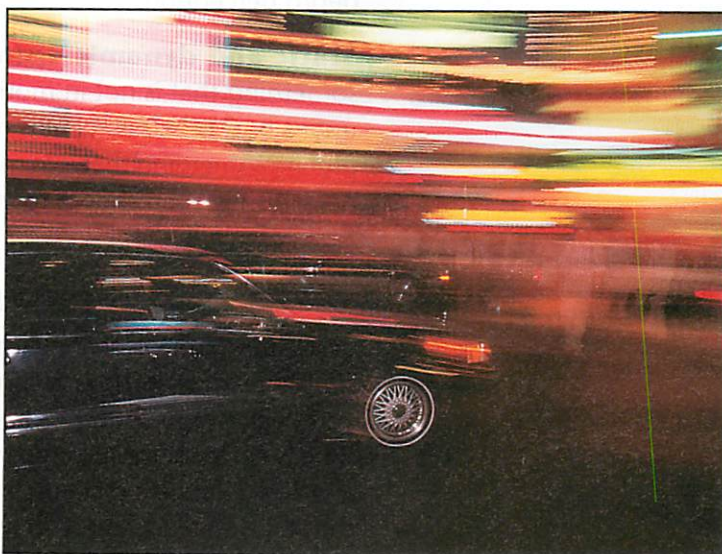
Alcohol affects your body by acting as a depressant. This means it is a drug that slows down and impairs the central nervous system. The part of the brain that alcohol affects first is the part that allows you to think clearly and make good decisions. Changes in thinking can occur even with small amounts of alcohol. This effect is an impairment that may not be noticed by the drinker. Alcohol can cause a

Did You Know?



In 1981, a Massachusetts high school lost two students in alcohol-related crashes in one week. From these needless deaths began a movement by Robert Anastas, the school's health director, which resulted in the formation of Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD). Now a national organization, SADD changed its name in 1997 to Students Against Destructive Decisions.

Blurred or double vision is often the result of a driver having too much to drink. **How can blurred vision affect your ability to drive?**



younger driver to drive too fast, pass when it is unsafe to do so, or make a bad decision in an emergency situation.

YOUR VISION IS AFFECTED

As you know, vision is the most important sense needed in driving. Alcohol impairs several specific areas of vision.

Visual acuity. This is sharpness of vision. Alcohol may make images blurry for the driver. This impairs your ability to identify properly what is in the traffic scene and to make good driving decisions.

Side vision. Alcohol affects your peripheral vision, or what you can see to each side. Normally, most people have 180 degrees of side vision. While looking straight ahead, you can usually notice objects at the side even though you cannot see them clearly. Alcohol reduces your visual field and makes it more difficult to see potential hazards on either side. Side vision is most important when going through intersections or past parked cars where pedestrians may step out.

Color distinction. Alcohol affects your ability to distinguish colors. Drivers get much information from different colors in the traffic scene. Red, for example, means only three things on a traffic sign: stop, yield, or some prohibition of action. If alcohol impedes your ability to determine the color of a sign or traffic light, that is a problem.

Night vision. Alcohol adversely affects your night vision. Seeing at night does not involve so much seeing small details as it does the detection of objects in the field of view. Normally, it takes 1 second for the pupil to constrict and respond to the glare of oncoming headlights. It takes up to 7 seconds after exposure to headlight glare for the pupil to once again adapt to the dark conditions. Any loss of night vision is important because most drinking is done at night.

Distance judgment. Alcohol reduces the ability to judge distance accurately. You must be able to determine how far objects are from your vehicle. The movement of other objects complicates distance judgment or depth perception.

Static and dynamic vision. **Static vision** involves visually interpreting something that is not in motion. This ability may not be significantly affected until a BAC of .10 percent is reached. **Dynamic vision** involves visually interpreting something that is in motion. A blood alcohol concentration as low as .02 percent has been shown to affect dynamic visual acuity.

YOUR REACTION TIME IS AFFECTED

Reaction time is definitely affected by alcohol. Research has also shown that simple reaction time is a stimulus–response reaction such as flinching when you hear a loud sound or taking your hand off a hot object. Simple reaction time is not significantly impaired by alcohol. However, complex reaction time is affected. Complex reaction time includes more complicated responses, such as the ability to react and steer left, steer right, or brake in an emergency. Complex reaction time, critical for driving, is impaired at very low BACs.

How Much Alcohol Affects Your Driving?

Even one drink might be enough to impair your ability to drive safely. From the moment alcohol enters your bloodstream, you begin to lose your ability to think clearly. Even a small amount of alcohol causes changes in your coordination. It should not come as a surprise that approximately 40 percent of all highway deaths are alcohol related.

FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRIVING

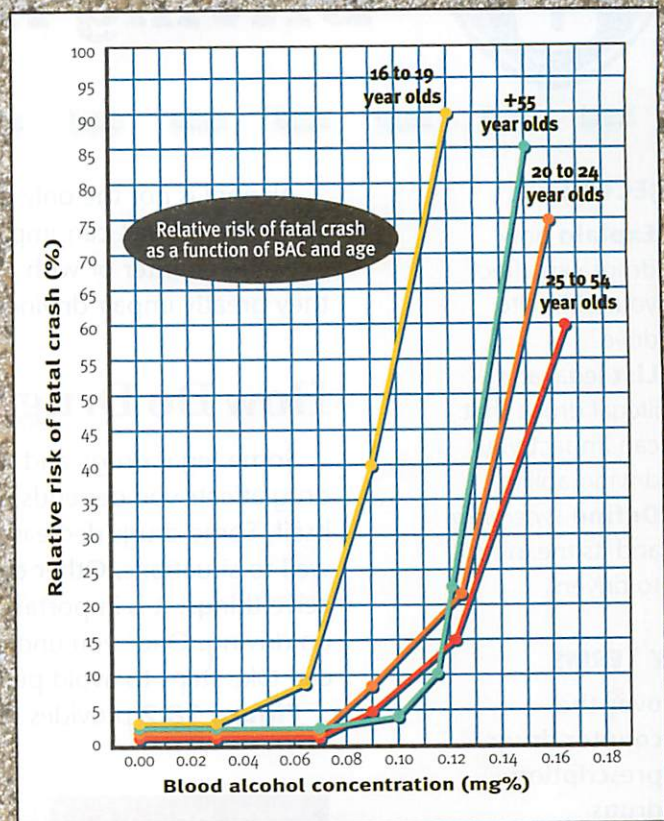
The facts spelled out in **Figure 18.1** tell you why alcohol-impaired driving is a recipe for disaster.

- As the alcohol concentration goes up, the chance of death goes up.
- Chance of death in a crash goes up even at low BAC.
- Chance of death increases rapidly with BAC above the legal limit.

Information from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration clearly shows that alcohol-related crashes are a large part of the highway safety problem. It also shows that large numbers of young people are involved in alcohol-related crashes.

FIGURE 18.1

PROBABILITY OF A FATAL COLLISION



WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

The driver has been drinking steadily. How can his companions get home? What is their responsibility to the driver?



Lesson 2 Review

- 1 How does alcohol affect your driving?
- 2 How does alcohol affect vision?
- 3 How is your reaction time affected by alcohol?



Other Drugs' Effect on Driving Ability

OBJECTIVES

1. **Explain** how drugs can affect your ability to drive.
2. **List** legal and illegal drugs that can impact your driving ability.
3. **Define** *synergism* and its meaning to drivers.

KEY TERMS

- ◆ over-the-counter drugs
- ◆ prescription drugs
- ◆ depressants
- ◆ stimulants
- ◆ hallucinogens
- ◆ narcotics
- ◆ synergism

Alcohol is not the only drug that can impair your ability to drive. Both legal and illegal drugs can impair your driving ability. Legal drugs can be bought over the counter or with a prescription. Illegal drugs are against the law, and they greatly impair driving ability too.

How Do Drugs Affect Driving Ability?

Some legal drugs and all illegal drugs impair your ability to drive. How a drug affects you depends on the condition of your own body and on the drug itself. Some drugs decrease your ability to make sound decisions and respond well to situations. Other drugs can actually change the way you think or perceive things. It is important that you know about these drugs and their effects on driving. Once you understand the danger of taking drugs and driving, you can take steps to avoid putting yourself and others at risk.

Figure 18.2 provides some of the major drugs that impair driving ability.

FIGURE 18.2

DRUGS THAT AFFECT DRIVING ABILITY

<i>Narcotics</i>	<i>Depressants</i>	<i>Stimulants</i>	<i>Hallucinogens</i>
Heroin	Alcohol	Amphetamines (speed)	Marijuana
Codeine	Barbiturates	Cocaine (crack or rock)	LSD
Morphine	Methadone		PCP (angel dust)
	Sleeping pills		Hashish
	Tranquilizers		

Many of the drugs listed above are illegal, but legal drugs can also impair your ability to drive.

What Types of Legal Drugs Impair Driving Ability?

Over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs, and alcohol and other depressants are all legally available. Even when prescribed by a doctor or purchased legally, many of these drugs can impair driving ability.

OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS

Over-the-counter drugs can be purchased legally in drugstores and supermarkets without a doctor's prescription. Many people do not even think of them as drugs. These drugs are heavily advertised for use on colds, flu, headaches, allergies, and other everyday ailments. It is important to read the package label of these drugs. Some over-the-counter drug labels warn that their use may "cause drowsiness or dizziness," or they warn "Do not drive after using." Pay attention to these warnings! They are written because these drugs may impair your ability to drive. It is your responsibility as a driver to know what side effects any medications you are taking might cause.



PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

You can get **prescription drugs** at a pharmacy or drugstore, but you cannot buy them unless your doctor writes a prescription or prescribes them for you. If your doctor does not tell you about their adverse effects, ask the pharmacist if you can drive safely while you are taking a particular prescription medication. Find out what side effects the drug may have that might affect your driving.

Many prescription drugs have warnings on the package or the bottle. When you pick up the prescription, look carefully at the package insert or container. If the labels advise you not to drive or not to take the medication in combination with alcohol, obey the warnings. It is your responsibility as a driver to know what drugs you are taking and what effects they can have.

DEPRESSANTS

Depressants are prescription drugs that slow down, or depress, the central nervous system. When used properly, their basic effect is to calm you down. Alcohol is a cheap, easily purchased, over-the-counter depressant drug. Doctors also prescribe depressant medications for patients who are experiencing a great deal of tension, who are very anxious, or who are being treated for high blood pressure. These drugs are also sometimes sold illegally.

While depressants can help a patient lessen stress and anxiety, they also slow down the patient's mental and physical activity. These drugs slow down reflexes and have a harmful effect on coordination. Be wary of these effects if you take depressants and need to drive. Do not combine prescription depressants with alcohol.

What Types of Illegal Drugs Impair Driving Ability?

Almost every type of illegal drug can impair your ability to drive and also your ability to think clearly. All these drugs affect your mind and trigger subtle changes in your perception. Most impair how your mind and body work. Three classes of illegal drugs are stimulants, hallucinogens, and narcotics.

Many of the capsules, tablets, and syrups commonly found in medicine cabinets are over-the-counter drugs. **Why is it important to read the package labels of these drugs before driving?**



Dealing with the UNEXPECTED

UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Be aware of signs that other drivers on the road may be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Various signs indicate possible problems.

- ▲ **Traveling at erratic speeds.** Intoxicated drivers often have trouble driving at a steady speed.
- ▲ **Running over curbs or turning into the wrong lane.** Intoxicated drivers are often unable to turn smoothly.
- ▲ **Weaving or swerving.** Intoxicated drivers suffer from loss of coordination and attention, which affects their ability to steer smoothly.
- ▲ **Ignoring or overshooting traffic signs.** Intoxicated drivers suffer impaired reflexes and vision loss.

STIMULANTS

Stimulants speed up, or stimulate, the central nervous system. Some are legal, but many stimulants are illegal. The caffeine in coffee and most soft drinks, for instance, is a widely available stimulant. Other powerful stimulants, such as amphetamines and cocaine, were once widely prescribed by doctors, but today their hazards are recognized by the medical profession, and they are more often purchased illegally. In addition to cocaine and rock cocaine, some other illegal stimulants include benzedrine, dexedrine, and methamphetamine. Some drivers misuse these drugs and take them to keep awake when driving long distances.

Stimulants can give you a false feeling of well-being and make you think that you are super alert. When abused, these drugs often cause drivers to take foolish and life-threatening risks. When the effects of stimulants wear off, which can happen very suddenly, users can quickly become very tired and quite depressed.

HALLUCINOGENS

Hallucinogens, such as LSD, PCP, marijuana, and hashish, are so powerful and dangerous that selling or using them is always against the law. **Hallucinogens**, or mind-altering drugs, change the way a person thinks, sees, and acts, all of which definitely impair driving ability. They are called hallucinogens because they can cause hallucinations. The abuse of these drugs can result in temporary psychosis or long-term mental damage. These drugs can cause drivers to lose the ability to judge the space and speed at which they are driving or can cause them to hallucinate so that they suddenly react to an obstacle that isn't really there.

No one really knows when the effects of hallucinogens wear off, but it is known that the chemicals in marijuana can stay in the body for 4 to 6 weeks. Drivers may think that the effects have worn off when they are still under the influence, and their driving remains impaired.

NARCOTICS

Narcotics, such as morphine and heroin, have a strong depressant effect and create a euphoria that can quickly become a serious addiction. Illegal forms are injected with a needle, smoked, or inhaled through the nose. The narcotic drugs can cause stupor or a coma. Many narcotic overdoses have resulted in death.

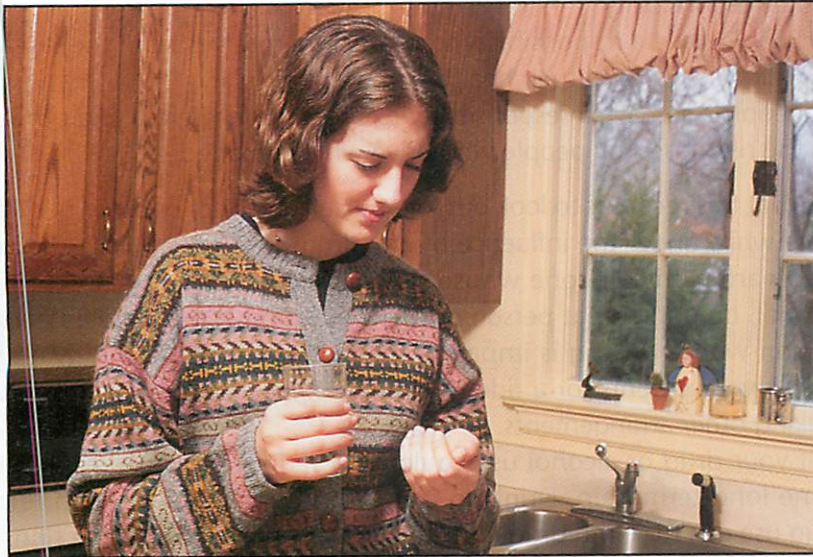
SYNERGISM

It is important to realize that mixing or taking two drugs often has a stronger effect than either drug taken alone. **Synergism** is the interaction of one drug with another to enhance the effect of one or both. For example, if a person drinks alcohol and takes a depressant, the combination could produce a depressive effect on the person greater than the typical effect of either substance. Even a nonprescription drug such as an antihistamine can be dangerous when mixed with alcohol. It is very important, therefore, to avoid combining alcohol and other drugs. In fact, it's a good idea to avoid combining any drugs unless they are prescribed by a physician and you understand their effects.

If you find yourself on the same roadway as a driver who shows any signs of being drug impaired, increase the amount of space between your vehicles. Be alert to the fact that there is an impaired driver sharing the roadway with you. If possible, inform a police officer of what you have noticed.

FYI

Marijuana masks the feeling of nausea that accompanies intoxication. Drinkers who mix marijuana and alcohol may not realize how much alcohol they have consumed. They may continue drinking until they suffer alcohol poisoning, which can result in coma or even death.



WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

You are taking a prescription medicine. Can you drive your sister to the movies? How will you decide if it is safe for you to drive?

Lesson 3 Review

- 1 What are some other kinds of drugs besides alcohol?
- 2 How do these drugs affect your ability to drive?
- 3 What kinds of legal drugs can impair your driving ability?



Preventing Impaired Driving

OBJECTIVES

1. **Identify** ways to prevent alcoholism and drug abuse.
2. **Describe** the laws that are designed to control impaired driving.

There is no such thing as responsible drinking for an underage person. Illicit drug use is equally irresponsible. There are, however, responsibilities that everyone has regarding impaired drivers. For yourself, you can learn how to avoid driving when drugs impair your driving. You can also learn the warning signs for alcoholism or drug addiction and how to seek help for long-term problems involving alcohol and drugs.

What Are a Person's Responsibilities Regarding Impaired Driving?

Many questions come up regarding a driver or a passenger's responsibilities for their own or another person's impaired driving. It is important to protect yourself and others from these effects. Here are two good things to understand about responsibility:

1. People have a responsibility to protect themselves from the threat that drug use poses to their health and well-being.
2. People also have a responsibility to protect themselves and others from the risk posed by people who drive while impaired.

What this means is to look out for yourself and also for other people. Do not drive while under the influence of any drugs that impair your driving ability. If you are with someone whose driving is obviously impaired by drugs or alcohol, do not let that person drive. In the short-term, you can help another person whose driving is impaired by taking the car keys, driving yourself, calling your parents for a ride, calling a taxi, riding public transportation, or making other arrangements.

If your drug or alcohol use could be a serious problem, consider getting some long-term help. Drinking can turn into alcoholism, and recreational drug use can turn into drug addiction. Be aware of some of the signs that can indicate you have a problem.

FYI

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have established lower BACs for young drivers. These zero tolerance laws make it illegal for people under 21 to drive with a BAC higher than 0.00 percent to 0.02 percent, depending on the state in which they live.

How Can Alcoholism or Drug Abuse Be Prevented?

Problem drinking can lead to alcoholism. The attitudes of a young person's friends and relatives and what that person does while drinking all affect what is considered "alcoholism" and "alcoholic." These terms are powerful, distasteful, and very negative, but they also indicate a real problem. Remember that nobody rings a bell and lets someone know when he or she has become an alcoholic or a drug abuser. That person must diagnose his or her problem, or

perhaps friends or family can help tell that person. Pattern of drinking, the amount of alcohol one consumes at any given time, and the reasons for using alcohol are all factors that determine if a person is dependent on alcohol or might be an alcoholic.

SUPPORT GROUPS

There are support groups to help alcoholics, problem users, and their relatives and friends. These self-help groups keep any information you may volunteer confidential. Two such groups for people with problems with alcohol or drugs are Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), and Narcotics Anonymous (NA). Alateen is an important organization for young people who think or know that they have a problem with alcohol and need help. Alanon is a support group for people who have an alcoholic parent, sibling, or friend.

LEGAL MEASURES TO CORRECT PROBLEMS CAUSED BY ALCOHOL

A number of legal measures are in place to deal with drivers who use alcohol or drugs. Several of these have been specifically aimed at young people. The number and scope of laws related to alcohol have increased greatly in recent years.

Administrative License Revocation. Administrative License Revocation (ALR) laws have been passed to provide immediate punishment for persons who fail or refuse a breath or blood test. The punishment is usually the immediate loss of your driver's license. ALR penalties may be in addition to other penalties for motor-vehicle operation while intoxicated.

Zero Tolerance Laws. Prohibiting any drinking until age 21 and "zero tolerance" laws have been enacted to prevent persons under age 21 from either drinking at all or driving a motor vehicle with any measurable alcohol in their system. Research has shown that these measures can be effective. For example, prohibiting drinking by persons under age 21 has resulted in reducing alcohol-related traffic deaths for that age group.

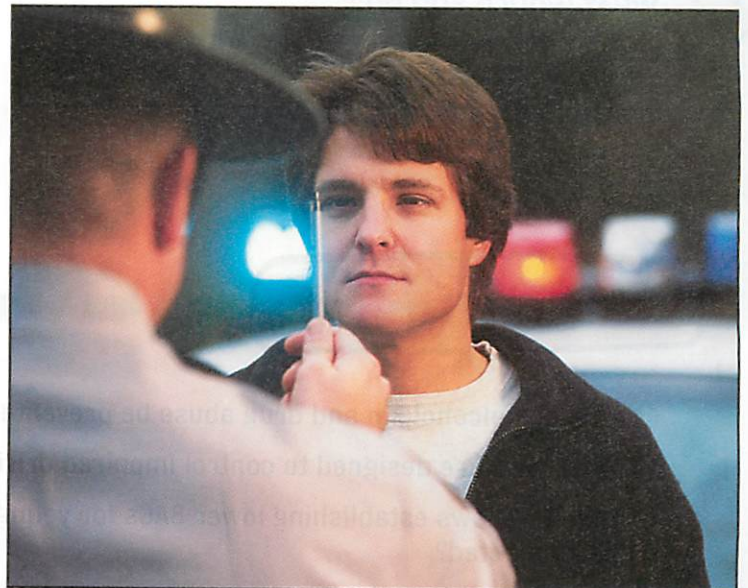
Open Containers. Many states also have laws that prohibit open containers of alcohol in a vehicle. If you are found with an open container such as an open beer can or an open bottle of wine, you will be legally penalized. These laws are designed to get people of legal age to drink at home, not in vehicles.

Blood Alcohol Concentration. Laws are also in place to define intoxication as more than "looking drunk," which can be a very subjective decision. Intoxication is also usually defined as a certain BAC (.08 percent in most cases). Thus a driver can be convicted of DWI/DUI if he or she reaches this level regardless of whether or not that person looks drunk or looks high.

FYI

Since 1982, the number of 15- to 20-year-olds killed in alcohol-related crashes has dropped from 22 to 9 per 100,000 youths—a decrease of more than 50 percent. Zero tolerance laws have been a major factor in this positive trend.

An intoxicated driver will have difficulty focusing on the pen as the officer moves it. **What are some of the physical effects of alcohol?**



Advice FROM THE EXPERTS

Dr. Maury Dennis

Texas A&M University
College Station, TX

While alcohol and other drugs affect all drivers, young drivers are most at risk. Even though their eyesight, reflexes, coordination, and physical condition are usually better than that of older people, they still are in proportionally more alcohol-related fatal crashes than any other age group. This may be because of much night driving and lack of experience with alcohol as well as inexperience as a driver. Learning to drive safely is hard enough; do not make it more risky by driving after drinking or using drugs.

What are some of the consequences of driving after drinking or using drugs?



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WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Your friend offers you an illegal drug. What would you say to your friend?

Legal penalties. A judge can impose several different types of legal penalties for alcohol-related offenses such as driving drunk. These include fines, loss of license, jail time, community service, education courses, and ignition interlocks.

In addition to the legal ramifications, insurance premiums usually shoot up with a DUI conviction. If a crash occurs as a result of the driver's being under the influence, a civil lawsuit may also be filed against the intoxicated driver.

MAKING GOOD DECISIONS

Education is the key to making informed, responsible decisions regarding alcohol and drugs. It is important to remember that alcohol is certainly a drug. Potential losses for young people resulting from drug abuse or alcohol abuse include money, freedom, health, friends/family, driver's license, and life.

Lesson 4 Review

- 1 How can alcoholism and drug abuse be prevented?
- 2 What laws are designed to control impaired driving?
- 3 Why have laws establishing lower BACs for young people been enacted?

USING THE MILEAGE CHART

Suppose you are planning to drive from Abilene to El Paso. How many miles would you be traveling? One way to find out would be to use a mileage chart such as the one on this page. Using a mileage chart is easy.

First look at the names of cities down the left side of the chart. Find Abilene, and put your left finger over it.

Then look at the cities across the top of the chart. Put your right finger on El Paso.

Now move your left finger across the chart until it reaches the box below El Paso. The number in the box is the distance in miles between Abilene and El Paso. The distance is 450 miles. That's quite a trip.

To estimate how long it will take you if you drive at an average speed of 55 miles per hour, divide 450 by 55. The trip will take between 8 and 9 hours. But don't forget to add in some time for rest stops. Therefore, you can figure on about a 10-hour trip.

MILEAGE CHART	Abilene	Amarillo	Dallas	Eagle Pass	El Paso	Houston	Lubbock	Midland	Odessa	Pecos	San Angelo	San Antonio
Abilene		273	180	302	450	355	171	148	180	245	92	250
Amarillo	273		351	517	421	597	134	237	258	330	310	513
El Paso	450	421	646	479		751	345	312	289	210	415	555
Lubbock	171	134	318	394	345	530		121	142	219	202	406
Odessa	180	258	352	301	289	507	142	20		75	132	345
San Angelo	92	310	262	215	415	374	202	113	132	210		215

TRY IT YOURSELF

- How many miles is it between San Angelo and Eagle Pass?
- If you are traveling at 55 miles an hour, how long will it take you to drive from El Paso to Pecos?
- Which trip would be longer—one from Odessa to Houston or one from Lubbock to San Antonio?

Key Points

Lesson 1

- 1 The three categories of alcohol use are experimentation (drinking out of curiosity), recreational drinking (drinking for what one thinks is fun), and alcohol abuse (the wrong, improper, or abnormal use of alcohol). (Pages 374–375)
- 2 Factors that influence alcohol's effects include expectations, mood, fatigue, and existing medications or medical sensitivities. (Page 375)



WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

You and a friend are offered a drink. You say no, but your friend wants to try one. What will you say to your friend?

Lesson 2

- 1 Alcohol decreases your skill and damages your judgment behind the wheel. It interferes with the brain's ability to use information to make good decisions and affects fine-muscle control that allows you to stay in your lane or to steer. A person who has had alcohol is also unable to successfully handle more complex or emergency situations. (Pages 378–379)
- 2 Alcohol can make your vision blurry, reduce your visual field, affect your ability to distinguish colors, adversely affect your night vision, reduce the ability to judge distance accurately, and reduce your static and dynamic vision. (Page 380)

Lesson 3

- 1 Drugs can decrease your ability to make sound decisions and respond well to situations. They can also change the way you think or perceive things. (Page 382)
- 2 Over-the-counter drugs, prescription drugs, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, and narcotics can affect and impair your driving ability. (Pages 382–385)



WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

You are taking a prescription medicine. Can you drive your sister to the movies? How will you decide if it is safe for you to drive?

Lesson 4

- 1 Support groups, legal measures, and good decision making are all ways to combat alcoholism and drug abuse. (Pages 387–388)
- 2 Legal measures designed to control problems caused by alcohol and drugs include Administrative License Revocation laws, zero tolerance laws, laws prohibiting open containers, laws defining intoxication through BAC, and legal penalties. (Pages 387–388)

On a separate sheet of paper, write the letter of the answer that best completes each sentence.

- 1 Chance of death in an alcohol-related crash goes up
 - a. at low BAC.
 - b. when BAC is .10.
 - c. only for nonimpaired drivers and passengers.
- 2 Over-the-counter drugs
 - a. may be used when driving short distances.
 - b. may impair driving ability.
 - c. must be ordered for you by a doctor.
- 3 You can reduce the effects of alcohol if you
 - a. take a very cold shower.
 - b. exercise.
 - c. allow several hours to pass.
- 4 To get help with a drinking problem,
 - a. drink just once a week.
 - b. drink only beer.
 - c. join a support group.
- 5 Alcohol is
 - a. a harmless substance.
 - b. a potentially dangerous drug.
 - c. not addictive.
- 6 Even a small amount of alcohol can affect your
 - a. long-term memory.
 - b. ability to pull out of a skid.
 - c. hearing.

On a separate sheet of paper, write the word or phrase that best completes each sentence.

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| synergism | depressants |
| prescription | stimulants |
- 7 Drugs that slow down the central nervous system are called ____.
 - 8 ____ drugs must be ordered by a doctor.
 - 9 ____ often give drivers a false sense of self-confidence and cause them to take foolish and life-threatening risks.
 - 10 The interaction of one drug with another to enhance the effect of one or both is ____.

Writing

Driver's Log

In this chapter, you have learned about how social pressures can cause you to behave in ways that will put you and others at risk. Imagine that a friend has been drinking and wants to drive you home. Your friend says, "Don't worry, I'm just fine." What will you say? How might your friend respond? Write a dialogue showing what might happen.

Projects

- 1 Many organizations work to educate drivers about the dangers of drinking and driving. Besides SADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) is probably the best known. Find information about MADD.
- 2 Refer to your state driver's manual or interview a police officer. Discover the circumstances under which a teenage driver can be convicted of DUI or DWI in your state. Find out about the penalties for conviction as well.

Chapter

19

Vehicle Readiness

