Beat Your Hangover



Introduction

It may have seemed a great idea the night before, one or two alcoholic drinks to help get you into the party atmosphere and to enable you to relax. You may have planned only a couple of drinks but then very quickly, you found yourself tempted to have just a few more. After all, surely, three or four drinks won't hurt? Sometimes, even with the best of intentions, it's easy to fall foul to alcohol over -exuberance especially during lively social events but even whilst, you consume one after the other, deep down you know that you are going to suffer for your lack of will-power the next day when you wake up to the nightmare of all hangovers.

Hangovers may be common side-effects from drinking too much but they are far from pleasant and can make you feel very ill whilst they last. The extent of the hangover can vary too depending on your tolerance to alcohol, whether you ate prior to going out, what type of drink you consumed and worst of all, whether you mixed your drinks.

Dehydration is one of the more noted side-effects but alcohol wreaks havoc with your body and you will also have lost a great deal of vitamins and minerals as a result of your over-indulgence. Whilst there are many over the counter cures available, it is not always a good idea to rely on your usual pain-killers whilst your body is in such a fragile state, instead it makes sense to take a more natural stance to try to repair the damage from the night before.

Hangover Symptoms

We have all experienced the ravages of too much alcohol but did you know that you can suffer a variety of symptoms? Some or all of them may be experienced and none of which are particularly pleasant.

The Hangover Headache

Caused by dehydration and too much stress on your liver, the headache often occurs through the inflammatory properties of the alcoholic drinks

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causing your brain and your muscles to pulsate. The strength, symptoms and duration of the headaches will vary - anything from a dull, nagging ache to a throbbing and violent pain.

Nausea

Many people feel nauseous after over-indulging and you may experience a nagging nauseous feeling that drags on or a bout of queasiness feelings that actually may grow worse throughout the day. Sometimes eating something (non-greasy can help) but even if you don't feel like it, drinking plenty of fresh water throughout the day will help to combat these feelings.

Sadly, the nausea may not be the only thing that you experience and you might find that you are violently sick throughout the day. It might not feel beneficial but if you are being sick, it's your body doing its best to eliminate that which is causing you to feel bad.

Increased Heart Rate

You might wake up after your heavy night of drinking and suddenly find your heart racing. First of all, don't panic if this happens because as scary as it might seem to be, it's a common reaction. Whilst over indulging in alcohol is not good, it's important to stay calm and to rest as much as possible. This increased heart rate will settle but your body needs nurturing and you can start the cleansing process by drinking water throughout the day.

Blurry Vision

This symptom is indicative of a real heavy night of drinking and it's likely to occur along with headaches and feelings of nausea. If this symptom happens regularly, you really should reduce the amount of drink you consume. Blurry vision or spots before the eyes do occur when far too much alcohol has been consumed.

<u>Depression</u>

Sadly many people drink to excess because they feel generally down or depressed and are trying to forget difficult times in their lives. People also tend to drink more in social environments to help them feel more confident. Alcohol gives false feelings and can lift flagging spirits for a while and increase confidence, unfortunately, this lift of spirits can also come crashing down again and depression can set in, especially when coupled with any other hangover side-effects.

Other hang-over symptoms include:

- Feelings of irritability
- Diarrhoea
- Appetite Loss
- Hot or cold symptoms
- Aching limbs

Pre-Hangover Cures

If you know that you are going out and are likely to indulge in a few drinks, it's worth taking note of the following as these simple tips can help you to avoid a hang-over altogether.

- 1. Drink plenty of water prior to going out as this will help you to avoid getting dehydrated. It's wise to also drink plenty of water throughout the evening too and supplement the odd glass of alcohol with some fruit juice. Keep an eye on your urine too. If it's a dark colour, it's a classic indicator that you need more fluids –that's water and not alcohol.
- 2. Eat before you go out. Drinking on an empty stomach will allow the alcohol to flood into your small intestine. Food helps to slow the effects.

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- 3. Vitamin B6 can be taken before you start drinking, whilst you are drinking and again just before you go to bed. Three sets of 50 mg's will be sufficient. Do not take too much as vitamin B6 can become poisonous.
- 4. Try to stick to one type of alcohol throughout the evening. Red wine, rum and brandy can cause some nasty hangover side effects.

Hangover Remedies – The Natural Way

1. Drink More

Drink as much fruit juice and water as you can. Your body is suffering from intense dehydration so topping up your fluids regularly will help you to start feeling more human. Pure fruit juice is packed full of vitamin C and this will also help you to get your body back on track. Avoid caffeine drinks however where possible or have just one weak coffee if you really feel the need.

2. Sleep

Sleep is really important when you are feeling the negative effects of the night before. Add a few drops of pure essential lavender oil to your pillow and try to sleep for a few hours whilst your body regenerates. Try listening to some gentle music and have a cold compress on your forehead to ease any headache.

3. Hot and Cold Treatment

When you feel a little bit better, have a shower and alternate between hot and cold water. This instant temperature change will soon help you to revitalise.

4. Exercise

It may be the last thing that you feel like doing but indulging in some intensive exercising for short bursts can be an instant awakener. Not for the faint-hearted though.

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5. Yoga

If your get up and go has truly gone, try some gentle stretching. Yoga for example exercises every part of the body with gentle, non-invasive postures. A little <u>yoga</u> will start making you feel much better.

6. Apples

Apples are reported to really help the symptoms of too much alcohol, eat several throughout the day. It's good not to eat too much the following day, but a regular top up of healthy foods will help your system to heal faster.

7. Bananas

If you like bananas, mix up a tasty banana milkshake with honey as this will help to calm your stomach and the honey helps to replace any depleted blood sugar levels. Bananas are full of electrolytes potassium and magnesium and these levels can be greatly depleted during a heavy drinking session.

8. Charcoal tablets

Charcoal tablets can be used whilst you are drinking as they help to absorb some of the impurities in the alcohol and will therefore lessen any hangover. If you are a regular heavy drinker however, do not use this remedy consistently as it can also absorb important nutrients.

9. Feverfew

Feverfew (herb) can be taken in place of pain-killers such as aspirin as they can be very hard on the stomach especially after alcohol. Feverfew can also assist drink- related headaches.

10 Ginger

Ginger supplements or a ginger tea will soon soothe your stomach. Supplements are readily available from health food stores and 500 mg of ginger capsules will suffice.

11 Honey

Honey can be taken regularly on its own, every 30 minutes or so until you start feeling a little more normal. Honey contains potassium and will help to combat the effects of the alcohol in your system.

12 Coffee

Can't ignore your thirst for a coffee, drink it black and unsweetened bar the juice of one lemon and this will add a little zing to your body.

13 Peppermint

If you need to soothe your stomach, indulge in a little peppermint tea as this will also help to ease any intestinal gas.

14 Stimulate Your Scalp

If you are suffering with the proverbial hangover thick head, then try a little scalp stimulation. Make sure that your whole scalp is stimulated by gently pulling your hair in clumps. This sends blood rushing to the scalp and will help relieve your headache.

15 Vitamin C

Take some additional vitamin C as this can help to stimulate the liver and therefore starts breaking down the alcohol. Try it in soluble form and 1000mg several times a day should be sufficient. Be careful not to over-indulge in vitamin C as it can cause diarrhoea.

16 Lime Juice

If you like lime juice, add two teaspoons of fresh lime juice with a teaspoonful of sugar to 8 oz of water. Don't drink it too fast. Slow consumption will help to stabilize those flagging blood sugars.

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17 Vitamin B

Vitamin B should be taken the night before as they can then start to work whilst you sleep. If in your intoxicated state, you forget to take them, remember to take them first thing in the morning as they can help to restore your energy levels.

It's important to have a high dosage of B complex for this to start working. Vitamin B1 helps to calm your nerves and vitamin B2 can help those bloodshot eyes as well as having a general positive effect on your system.

18 Thyme tea

Thyme tea is easily made by infusing some freshly picked (preferably) leaves in a cup and add boiling water. Leave for five minutes, remember to remove the leaves and drink.

19 Tomato Juice

If you like tomato juice, it works well as a prevention remedy as well as a morning after cure.

20 Persimmon

Eat a raw one first thing to help ease your hangover symptoms.

21 Raw Cabbage

Raw Cabbage can help to ease headaches associated with drinking too much.

22 Evening Primrose Oil

If you have any evening primrose oil to hand, then it's worth taking a supplement as it can help to ease any really bad hangover headaches.

23 Royal Jelly

Need a boost to your energy levels? Royal Jelly will help to combat lethargy as it contains all of the B complex vitamins.

24 Vitamin D

Vitamin D will help to soothe your nerves following any excessive bout of alcohol.

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25 Milk Thistle

Milk Thistle supplements help to protect your liver from the alcohol toxins. Ideally take the supplement prior to drinking so that the ingredients can start to work.

26 A hot bath

A nice hot bath can really help you to sweat out the toxins and it will also soothe your body and help you to relax.

27 Honey

Add some honey to your tea with a little cinnamon and start to feel better quickly.

28 Massage

Indulge in a little head and neck massage to ease any throbbing headaches. A massage will help you to ease the pressure felt around your temples and your eyes, plus it's wonderfully relaxing.

29 Eat a good breakfast

Avoid fatty foods i.e. the proverbial cure-all fry up but a decent, healthy breakfast will help you to feel less sick and give you a little more energy. In addition, it will help you to start the hangover healing process.

30 Hot Toddy

Create a non-alcoholic hot toddy. Add honey, lemon and hot water and drink several times a day.

Detox your System

Detoxing will help you to eliminate any toxic substances from your body and there are a number of ways to do just this. There are specific detox kits available online or at your local pharmacy or you can quite simply make your own detox juices which work as an instant pick-me up for a hangover cure but also for any time where you require a refreshing or natural health aid.

You can buy an inexpensive juicer quite easily, choose one that operates on a low speed to avoid heating the nutrients but a powerful juicer that extracts all of the goodness from the fruit and leaves pulp dry is important. It's worth looking into purchasing one that is easy to clean too as the last thing you will want to do when feeling the ravages of alcohol is worrying about dismantling and the fastidious cleaning of the machine.

Carrot and Beet juice

Excellent juice beneficial for the kidneys

4-5 carrots

3-4 small beets

Great for general detoxification but if you are fairly new to juicing or start to experience dizziness, have a smaller dosage to start with.

Carrot and beet juice

1 carrot

1/2 beet

1 stick celery

1 cucumber

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Makes a superb breakfast drink. Ideal for hangovers as it works as an effective liver cleanser.

Cabbage juice

2 pears or 2 carrots

1/2 small cabbage

2 sticks celery

Handful watercress

Cabbage may taste a little sharp but it promotes a healthy digestion and can ease constipation whilst preventing fluid retention. Importantly for a hangover cure-all, the cabbage contains important compounds to help your liver function properly. The other ingredients also work as intestinal cleansers.

Amazing Green

2 celery sticks

1 cucumber

2 handfuls spinach

Lettuce leaves

Kale leaves

Parsley

Another great detoxification juice that is easy to create. It is worth adding the cucumber and celery to the mix last as both of these vegetables can help to flush out the other leafy green fibers.

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Fruity liver cleanser

2 apples

1 bunch grapes

1/2 beet

1/4 grapefruit

1/4 lemon

If you fancy a fruit detox, then this liver cleanser juice is ideal. Great for first thing in the morning but can be consumed anytime during the day.

The Carrot and Apple Cleanser

4 carrots

2 apples

1 lemon

Dandelion leaves (handful of washed leaves)

An excellent juice that can be enjoyed anytime of the day. The freshly washed dandelion leaves are a natural diuretic and so this is an excellent liver health promoting juice.

The 'Morning After' Juice

- 1 Papaya
- 2 Carrots
- 2 Oranges
- ½ Cucumber

Skin the orange (leaving as much pith as possible). Then peel the papaya, and chop into small pieces. Slice carrots and cucumbers. If organic, leave the skins on.

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Add to the juicer and then pour over ice. This juice has lots of vitamin C and helps to replenish any lost vitamins through alcohol related dehydration.

Mango Juice Delight

2 Mango's ½ Punnet of strawberries

Juice these ingredients together and pour over ice. This can be used as a juice or add natural yoghurt to make a smoothie. Rich in vitamins and antioxidants.

Total Fitness Smoothie

1 cup of Cranberry Juice

8oz fresh, organic strawberries

- 1 large banana
- 1 Cup of orange juice
- 1 cup of natural yoghurt

Packed with important vitamins, you may not feel fit but this smoothie will soon have you back on your feet.

All of the ingredients and measurements can be adjusted to suit your tastes. Be creative with <u>your juices and smoothies</u> as what suits one person may not suit another. Experimentation is the name of the game and providing you start slowly (as they are packed with a variety of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants). You will soon have your favourite hang-over or revitalising cures for an off day.

Note; It is best to use organic fruits and vegetables where possible but if you are unable to purchase organic, ensure that you have removed the skin and peel prior to juicing.

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Summary

Hangovers are bad news at any age but you may have noticed that as you increase in age, your hangovers seem to get much worse! It's not your imagination that this is happening, it is because those critical enzymes that work to break down alcohol start to diminish as you get older and do not work as efficiently. Cheaper alcohol is also likely to increase the side effects of any hangovers as they contain a 'chemical soup' from the fermentation or distillation stage. Essentially, more expensive alcohol is healthier and contains fewer toxins.

With age comes awareness of these facts and also the ability to handle your alcohol much more succinctly. A little pre-planning and some sensible precautions can ensure that you do not suffer unnecessarily from over-indulgence and yet can still have a good night out.

If you know that you may indulge a little, do the sensible thing and make sure you have a wholesome meal before going out and that you drink plenty of fresh water throughout the evening. When you return home and before collapsing on the bed in a drunken heap, force yourself to drink a little more water and you will be glad that you did.

Prevention is also much better than a cure but if you do succumb to alcohol over- indulgence, then make sure you have at least some of these hangover cures ready as they will help you to ease the nasty side-effects, prepare your body for the chemical toxins about to infiltrate your system but also allow you to regenerate that healing process quickly, easily and effectively with some natural home- made cures that will soon get you back on your feet.

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