

## Diabetes and Alcohol



Even though we are talking about medicine, it is important to talk about the use of alcohol during this meeting. Alcohol can have an effect on your diabetes and the way your medicine works.

The use of alcoholic beverages depends on several things:

### 1. Your diabetes control:

Stay away from alcohol if your diabetes is under poor control – this means if your A1C is higher than 7. If glucose is under control, one or two drinks in a day may not affect glucose very much.

### 2. Diabetes medicine that you are taking:

Some diabetes pills and alcohol may not mix. Alcohol may react with diabetes medicine and

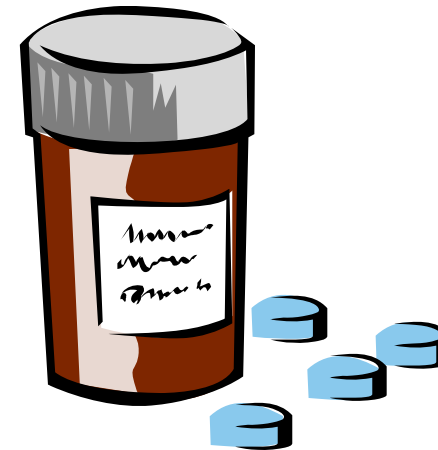
cause some unpleasant side effects. These include:

- Hypoglycemia
- Flushing or becoming “beet red”
- A rapid heart rate
- Dizziness
- Nausea

If you are taking diabetes medications, such as insulin, sulfonylureas or repaglinide, your blood sugar may go too low if you drink alcohol. These diabetes medicines lower blood sugar (glucose). If you are taking Glucophage, ask your doctor about drinking alcohol. It is best NOT to:

- Drink alcohol when blood sugar is too low,
- Drink when insulin or glucose lowering diabetes pill is working hardest,
- Drink alcohol on an empty stomach.

## Diabetes Medicine



And

## Alcohol



The best way to find out about alcohol and how it might affect your blood sugar and medication is to ask your health care provider. If you think you drink too much and want to drink less, talk to your health care provider.

### 3. New medicine:

Always check with your provider whenever you start new medicine to find out if you can drink alcohol safely when you are taking the medicine.

### 4. When you eat:

If you are going to have a drink, have one with a meal. Drinking on an empty stomach can cause hypoglycemia (low glucose).

### 5. What and how often you choose to drink:

Remember that alcohol contains a large number of empty calories meaning there are no vitamins in it. These calories are usually changed into fat in our bodies.