



# next inSTALLment



*a campus wellness letter*

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An inSTALLment classic

## in-TOXIC-ation

### NWhat do you know about alcohol poisoning??

ALCOHOL AWARENESS WEEK OCTOBER 22 - 26

#### How does alcohol kill? $\Lambda$

Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant and acts on those areas of the brain that control consciousness, respiration, and heart rate. It can “turn off” these areas of the brain, resulting in coma and then death.

#### Symptoms of Alcohol Poisoning: N

- Passing out
- Vomiting even when passed out
- Difficult to awaken
- Slow shallow or irregular breathing (less than 8 breaths per minute)
- Skin is cold, clammy, pale, or “blue”

#### What to do if someone shows signs of alcohol poisoning:

- ⊙ Wake the person up; try to keep the person awake
- ⊙ If the person is or becomes unresponsive, on campus call Campus Safety 4911, off campus call 911
- ⊙ Position the person on his/her side (never on the back or stomach)
- ⊙ Stay with the person until help arrives
- ⊙ If the person stops breathing, administer CPR

**DO NOT ASSUME AN UNCONSCIOUS PERSON WILL ‘SLEEP IT OFF’**

#### Things to know:

- If you have been drinking, your judgment may be compromised—get another person’s opinion!
- Alcohol keeps working even after you stop drinking—a person may reach the highest level of in-TOXIC-ation after 30-90 minutes have passed—so you cannot assume someone is going to be fine on the basis of your first impression.
- Drinking a lot in a short amount of time (playing drinking games; downing jello shots) can result in alcohol poisoning when the alcohol gets to the brain
- There is no “quick” way to get sober. It takes time for the liver to metabolize alcohol. Cold showers, caffeine, oxygen, exercise all have little effect.
- As a general rule, it takes as many hours to get sober as the number of drinks you have consumed.
- If a person has used drugs (prescription or not) together with alcohol, the effects of the alcohol will be increased and the danger of death increases.

Concerned about your alcohol use or that of someone you care about? Take a sobering questionnaire to learn if your drinking pattern puts you in the danger zone. Go to WellPoets on the Whittier College website. (Go to home page, “Student Life,” Student Resources,” “Wellness Assessments.”)

Source cited: Alcohol Poisoning by John Brick, Ph.D., Intoxikon International, <http://members.aol.com/intoxikon/alcohol.poisoini>

The *next inSTALLments* can now also be found at [www.whittier.edu](http://www.whittier.edu): click on Student Life, click on Wellness Letter: or sign on to MyWhittier.edu, click on Campus Life, click on Wellness Coalition, click on Wellness Letter.

Watch for and attend Alcohol Awareness Week Activities October 22 – October 26.

