

**For Immediate Release**  
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**It's Spring Break: How Much Does Heavy Drinking Affect Your Body?**

It's the time of year when more than 1.5 million high school and college students head for warm climates to soak up the sun and drink large quantities of alcohol. Students who vacation with friends over spring break drink almost three times as much as those who stay home with parents or relatives, according to a report in the September, 2007 issue of the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*.

Instead of just telling students not to drink heavily, this year try explaining the science behind how drinking large quantities of alcohol affects their bodies. This advice comes from The Science Inside Alcohol Project of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), which is conducting research on teen drinking and developing an interactive Web-based science and health curriculum for middle school students.

Here's a quick True or False test students can take to determine how much they know about the science of ingesting large quantities of alcohol.

1. Most collegestudents do not drink very much during spring break.

FALSE. *The Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* reports that students show "bursts" of heavy alcohol use during holidays, vacations and weekends. Students in this study reported having more than 30 drinks each over a four day period during spring break.

2. Vomiting, confusion, stupor, and the inability to wake up are the results of alcohol poisoning.

TRUE. Students may think their friend is just really drunk but he or she can also have alcohol poisoning, which can be fatal. More than 1,500 college students each year die from unintentional alcohol-related injuries including car crashes, according to MADD.

3. Black-outs (not remembering what happened while drinking) are a regular occurrence among college students who drink frequently.

TRUE. Twenty seven percent of students who drank reported at least one incident of forgetting who they were with or where they were while drinking. More than half reported having memory loss during drinking at some point in their lives.

4. Some women can drink as much as men and it won't affect them differently.

FALSE. Alcohol mixes with body water and women have a higher percentage of water in their bodies, so the amount of alcohol women drink becomes highly concentrated quickly.

5. Only a few medications interact harmfully with alcohol.

FALSE. More than 150 medicines should not be mixed with alcohol including sleeping pills, antihistamines, antidepressants, anti-anxiety drugs, painkillers and also medicines for diabetes, high blood pressure, epilepsy, antacids and those for motion sickness. Mixing alcohol with these types of medications can be extremely dangerous.

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