

Safety Fact Sheet



These programs offered by the Utah Safety Council offer practical strategies to reduce collision related injuries and fatalities on Utah roadways.

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRIVING

Myth: "Alcohol is a stimulant."

Fact: Alcohol is a depressant. It acts on the central nervous system like an anesthetic to lower or depress the activity of your brain.

Myth: "Drinking coffee sobers me up."

Fact: Coffee cannot rid your system of alcohol. It just makes you a nervous, wide-awake drunk. Only time reverses impairment.

Myth: "I always stay away from the hard stuff."

Fact: Alcohol is alcohol. Beer has the same effect as straight scotch. One 12-ounce beer has as much alcohol as a 1.5 ounce shot of 80-proof whiskey or a 5-ounce glass of wine.

Myth: "I'm bigger so I can handle my liquor better."

Fact: Size is only one factor in how alcohol affects you. Body chemistry, how tired you are, and the amount of food in your stomach all play a part in how you handle liquor. Your reflexes and judgment can be affected with the first drink.

Myth: "Once I roll down the car window, I'm okay."

Fact: No amount of fresh, chilly air can reverse impairment. You gain nothing by rolling down a window or turning on the air conditioner.

Myth: "I just drive slower."

Fact: Many people do, believing they can actually compensate for being impaired by creeping along at 22 mph. This can be very dangerous. Others race along at 75 mph. The truth is, impaired drivers are unsafe at any speed.

Myth: "All I have to do is splash my face with cold water."

Fact: Splash all you like. You can even take a cold shower. It may make you cleaner, but it won't sober you up or make you a safe driver.

Myth: "A drink or two makes me a better driver."

Fact: Even one drink can cloud your thinking, dim your vision and slow your reflexes. Small amounts of alcohol can impair your judgment and put you and others on the road at risk of death or disabling injury.

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

