



CRIME PREVENTION HANDOUT

HOW TO IDENTIFY AND CARE FOR AN INTOXICATED PERSON

Unfortunately, getting drunk is common on the college campus. Because of this you are likely to come into contact with a person who is intoxicated or experiencing an episode of life-threatening, acute alcohol intoxication (alcohol poisoning). How do you care for this person? How do you tell if the person is acutely intoxicated? What should you do? Listed below are some of the signs and symptoms of intoxication, alcohol poisoning, and the appropriate actions to take. This list is not all inclusive.

IDENTIFICATION

Alcohol affects each individual differently. The affect of alcohol on a person will vary according to the person's mood, the time of day, amount of food in the stomach, the mixer used, how fast the person drinks, what and why they are drinking.

Signs of intoxication:

- A person who is overly friendly.
- Someone talking loudly, bragging, or using foul language.
- You will usually find the person annoying or arguing with others.
- The inability to light a cigarette, or attempting to light more than one cigarette at a time.
- Someone with slurred or slowed speech, who tends to lose their train of thought.
- A person who complains about the service.
- Spills the drink or misses their mouth.
- Glassy eyes, dilated pupils, inability to focus, sleepy look, and bobbing head.
- Sudden or unexplained mood changes.
- Drinking faster than usual.
- Staggering, swaying, or the inability to walk.

INDICATIONS THAT SOMEONE NEEDS HELP

The following situations are indicators that the individual needs IMMEDIATE PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION OR ASSISTANCE.

The individual:

- Is unable to stand or walk, or can do so only with difficulty
- Is breathing slow (10 or less per minute) and shallow breaths
- Is passed out or stuporous
- Has fever or chills
- Has difficulty speaking
- Has an injury
- Is paranoid, confused, or disoriented
- Is violent or threatening
- Appears to be a risk to him/herself or others
- Appears to be dehydrated, with a bluish tint to the lips and fingernails

CALL FOR POLICE OR MEDICAL HELP WHEN:

- You are in doubt about what to do
- You need transportation to medical facilities
- The person you are assisting is rowdy or too unruly to handle
- The person refuses assistance and appears likely to harm him/herself or others
- The person has been using other drugs
- The person attempts to drive

WHEN YOU CALL FOR HELP:

- Identify yourself
- State that you have a problem with someone who has been drinking excessively
- Give your specific location

If you cannot keep the person awake, position them on their side in a fetal position. Place a pillow in the small of their back to prevent them from rolling out of this position. This is important to help prevent aspiration if the person should vomit. **STAY WITH THE PERSON** and wake them up frequently. Just because the person is sleeping doesn't mean

that the alcohol cannot get to the brain. Alcohol levels continue to rise, causing the person to become unconscious, rather than asleep. If at any time you can not wake the person up, CALL 911.

FOR THE IMMEDIATE CARE OF AN INTOXICATED PERSON:

WHAT TO DO	WHAT NOT TO DO
Stay calm. Assess the situation	<i>DO NOT let your anxiety transfer to the individual in trouble.</i>
Keep your distance. Before approaching or touching the person, explain what you intend to do.	<i>DO NOT try to walk, run, exercise the drunken person, or try to keep the person awake; DO NOT permit the person to drive.</i>
Speak in a clear, firm, reassuring manner.	<i>DO NOT administer anything orally - food, liquid or drug - to sober the person up. THE ONLY THING THAT WILL SOBER A DRUNK PERSON IS TIME.</i>
Keep the person still and comfortable.	<i>DO NOT give the person a cold shower. The shock may cause him/her to pass out and sustain an injury.</i>
Stay with the intoxicated person who is vomiting. Lay the person on his/her side. KEEP THE PERSON FROM SWALLOWING VOMIT.	<i>DO NOT attempt to constrain the person without sober assistance.</i>
Monitor the person's breathing. If they are breathing less than ten breathes per minute, DO NOT LEAVE THEM.	<i>DO NOT laugh, ridicule, provoke, anger, or threaten the individual.</i>

How to Contact UTSA Police Department:

- 911 from any campus phone
- 210.458.4242
- Any campus emergency phone (parking lot, blue light, elevator)
- If you dial 911 from a cellular telephone, you will get the San Antonio Police Department. Tell them you are on The University of Texas at San Antonio property and they will dispatch the University Police.

References:

- <http://www.radford.edu/~kcastleb/action.html>
- <http://www.uhs.uga.edu/atod/emergencies.html>