

DANGERS OF DRINKING AND DRIVING



Driving drunk is one of the most irrational decisions that an individual can ever make. Often, even those that normally think rationally will make the irresponsible decision to drive drunk. There is nothing good that will come from drinking and driving, and a person that plans on drinking should always plan ahead. They should have a designated driver with them, take a taxi or Uber, use public transportation or use one of the many other options that are available to get them from one place to another. There are serious and negative consequences when it comes to drunk driving such as killing oneself or taking the lives of others. There are also stiff penalties that the law imposes on drunk drivers.

How Alcohol Impacts a Person's Ability to Drive

The mind and body can suffer greatly from alcohol consumption. Permanent damage to the brain, liver and other major body organs is common with long-term alcohol consumption. Illness from a drinking habit will usually occur to those that are classified as alcoholics and usually is noticed for many years. This does not mean that occasional drinkers are safe from the dangers of drinking alcohol. Blackouts, hallucinations, behavior changes, fatigue and lack of brain communication will happen to anybody that consumes alcohol.

No matter how tolerant a person thinks that they are to alcohol, it will have a negative effect on their driving ability. It is common to hear a person boast about how well they drive after they drink, but this is just plain foolishness. Alcohol impacts everybody's ability to drive safely.

Judgment

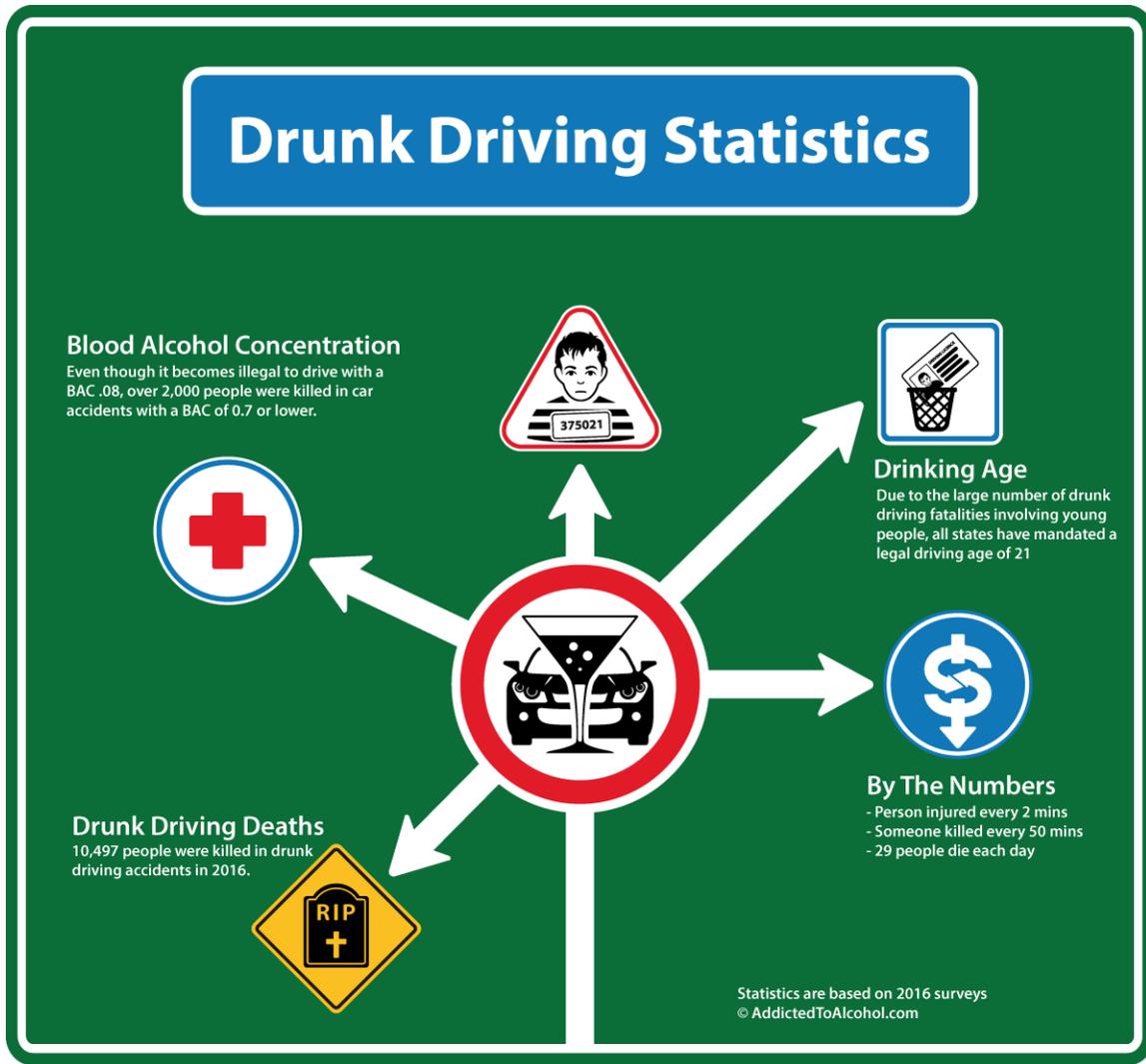
Alcohol impacts a person's judgment and concentration level. Often, when a **drunk driver** is behind the wheel of a vehicle, they will be a bit over-relaxed and confident in their driving ability. In reality, they will have a lower alertness level, slower reaction time, think slowly and have a difficult time tracking moving objects such as other vehicles and pedestrians.

Vision

Driving under the influence will also affect a person's vision. When a person has trouble focusing their eyes, it is a major problem because it will be difficult for them to not only focus on the road ahead of them, but they will also have a difficult time making out things in their rear view mirror and side mirrors. They may just see a blur and not be able to judge the distance of this blurred object.

Coordination

Due to the [effects that alcohol](#) has on the brain, a driver that has been drinking will have their balancing coordination effected. This will lead to having a difficult time steering and staying in their lane. Also, due to their relaxed state of mind and slower brain reaction time, they will not be able to brake appropriately.



Statistics Don't Lie

In 2016, a total of 10,497 people were killed in drunk driving accidents. This alarming statistic is why law enforcement agencies sometimes set up alcohol checkpoints in certain communities. Preventing these fatalities from happening is their number one priority.

Even though it becomes illegal to drive when a person's Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) reaches .08, that doesn't mean it is safe to drive with a lower BAC. Over 2000 people were killed in car accidents during 2016 when the driver had a BAC 0.7 or lower.

Due to the high number of drunk driving fatalities involving young people, all states have mandated a legal drinking age of 21. With car accidents being the number one cause of teenage deaths, a quarter of those fatalities had alcohol involved. Drivers under the age of 24 made up one third of all alcohol related fatalities.

Children often suffer from the irresponsible decisions made by an impaired driver. In 2016, one out of every six children (under the age of 14) that were passengers in an alcohol related car accident died. Sadly, these innocent victims were in the same car as the impaired driver 54 percent of the time.

A person is injured every two minutes due to an alcohol related crash. Every 50 minutes, there is somebody that is killed due to an alcohol related fatal crash. Every day, 29 people die due to a drunk driving accident.

Putting Lives in Danger



When a person drinks and drives, they are not only endangering their life, but they are also endangering the lives of others. Even though there are serious consequences for those that get caught by law enforcement for driving under the influence, the main concern to most people is preventing drunk driving and saving lives.

Most people that drink and drive are in denial of the reality that can happen. They have heard other stories about what has happened to other people, but they have the mindset that it cannot happen to them. The alcohol consumption only makes this worse as it gives them the thought that they are invincible.

As mentioned earlier, the effects of drinking alcohol and getting behind the wheel is very dangerous. An accident can happen in a split second, and a drunk driver can lose their life, it simply is not worth the risk. A person has their whole life ahead of them, and to lose their life because of one idiotic decision is simply not worth it. If they were to die in a car accident, they will not only be losing their life, but they will also be hurting those that love them. It is traumatic for a mother, father, husband, wife or any other loved one to hear that a person that means the world to them died in a car accident because they made an irresponsible choice.

Innocent drivers on the road are often the victims of a drunk driving fatality. These people are just going about their business when a drunk driver swerves into them or runs a red light and hits them. Often, these innocent victims will be seriously injured or die. If the drunk driver survives the crash, he or she will be in serious trouble with the law for their actions and will suffer serious consequences. Felony charges can be placed on the drunk driver, and they can be charged with manslaughter, murder, and other charges. Every situation is different, and each state has their own laws, but taking another person's life while driving drunk is sure to have stiff penalties. Many times, if convicted, a person may have serve 15 plus years in prison.

All too often, a drunk driver will get behind the wheel with their family in the car. This may include their spouse and even their children. Making a decision to drive while intoxicated is irresponsible as it is, but by jeopardizing the life of their family makes it even worse. Innocent children are often the victims of drunk driving accidents, and there is nothing more heartbreaking than to hear about children that die in a car accident. The really sad part about it is that an accident like this could easily be prevented.

Getting Caught Drunk Driving

Police departments are always on the look out for drunk drivers. Police officers have been trained to identify the road tactics of those that have been drinking and driving. For



example, one of the signs of a drunk driver is a person driving at night without their headlights on. Sure, many sober drivers have made this mistake before, but a large percentage of people forgetting to put on their headlights are under the influence. This is just one example of the many signs that police officers look for.

Tough drunk driving enforcement laws have had a serious impact on the decline of drunk driving deaths since the 1980s. Even with the decline, there are still too many people being killed by these senseless accidents. Police departments save lives everyday by setting up drunk driver checkpoints to try and minimize the amount of drunk drivers on the road.

Those that are caught driving under the influence will be charged with a crime. Depending on the circumstances, they will be charged with either a misdemeanor or a felony. First time offenders will usually get charged with a misdemeanor, but there are cases when a prosecutor will go after a felony. These cases usually involve children being in the car, driving under a suspended license due to a previous driving under the influence charge or if bodily harm or death was caused to another person due to the intoxicated driving.

A misdemeanor charge will typically include revocation of the driver's license, expensive fines and even jail time. The fees that an individual would have to pay will be very expensive. Sometimes, the fines and legal fees that a person will have to pay may exceed \$10,000. There are certain states that will require a person to install an ignition interlock device on their vehicle. The driver will have to breath into this device before the car will start. If the person has been drinking, the vehicle will not start for them.

Multiple DUI convictions will have more serious consequences. The prosecution will certainly go after a felony charge. Just as those who get a misdemeanor charge, the same punishment, plus more, will be applied to those who are charged with a felony. Again, heavy fines will have to be paid, but instead of jail time, the convicted individual will have to serve time in prison. It is not uncommon for a DUI offender to do over a year in prison. With a felony on their record, they will lose many of their civil rights. They will no longer have the right to own a gun, they will not be able to vote, serve on juror duty and may have a tough time becoming employed.

It's for good reason that the punishment for drunk driving is very harsh. Too many lives are lost every single year, and these fatalities could have easily been prevented. The best advice for anybody out there is to take the keys away from a person that has consumed alcohol and is considering getting behind the wheel. By doing this, an individual will be preventing an accident that will never have a chance to occur.