

# ALCOHOL & DIABETES

## FACTS:

- Drinks with alcohol affect your blood glucose levels.
  - High blood glucose can be caused by the carbohydrates, sugars and alcohol in a drink.
  - Low blood glucose is caused by your liver's reaction to the alcohol.  
*Your liver stops making glucose until it has processed the alcohol.*
- If you take insulin or diabetes medications, alcohol can drop blood sugar levels even lower.
- Alcohol harms your body's ability to bounce back from a drop in blood sugar.
- Heavy drinking damages your liver making diabetes harder to control.
- Alcohol worsens high blood triglycerides (fats), nerve damage and diabetic eye disease in people with diabetes. If you have any of these conditions, you should NOT drink alcohol.

## TIPS:

- It is best to drink alcohol ONLY when your diabetes is under control.
- If you do drink, choose drinks that are low in alcohol and sugar.
- Never drink alcohol on an empty stomach.
- Check your blood glucose level after you drink.
- Wear medical identification. Low blood sugar can be misidentified as drunkenness (dizziness, disorientation, and sleepiness.)
- No more than 2 drinks per day for men and 1 drink per day for women.

**STANDARD DRINKING CHART**  
One Standard drink is equal to:

	One glass (5 oz.) wine	
	One can (12 oz) beer or ale	
	One single shot (1.5 oz.) hard liquor	
	One small glass (4 oz.) sherry, liqueur, or aperitif	