

# Diabetes and Alcohol

*Alcohol can affect your blood sugar for up to 12 hours.*

*If your blood sugar gets low from a drink, eat a protein snack like cereal with milk, a yogurt, or an apple with peanut butter.*

For many reasons, it's best to avoid drinking alcohol if you have diabetes. This is especially true if you have complications from diabetes like high blood pressure.

## Questions to ask yourself before drinking alcohol:

- ⇒ Is my diabetes in good control right now?
- ⇒ Is my blood pressure in good control right now?
- ⇒ Do I know how alcohol affects my sugar?
- ⇒ Do I take any medications that should not be mixed with alcohol?
- ⇒ Does my health team agree that safe drinking is okay for me?

Having one drink occasionally is not a problem for some people with diabetes. But, if you have long-term complications from diabetes, it's best to avoid alcohol altogether.

## Alcohol can make these health conditions worse:

- ⇒ Burning or tingling in the hands or feet, if you have nerve damage
- ⇒ Damage to your eyes
- ⇒ Blood pressure that isn't controlled
- ⇒ High triglycerides
- ⇒ Kidney damage

## Important tips:

- ⇒ If you don't drink, don't start now that you have diabetes.
- ⇒ Some research shows that a glass of wine can have heart benefits. But, drinking too much alcohol erases all benefits. Avoid over-drinking.
- ⇒ Tell your health team if you drink regularly or if your drinking habits change.
- ⇒ Always eat a meal or snack if you've taken a drink. Test your sugar before bed if you've had a drink in the evening to determine whether you need a snack before sleeping.