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The Roller Coaster Ride: Exploring Short-Term Effects of Alcohol

Do you know what happens to your body when you consume alcohol? It's like taking a ride on a roller coaster, with ups and downs, twists and turns, but not always the fun kind. In this reading passage, we'll dive into the short-term effects of alcohol on people, and you'll learn how it can impact your body and mind, even in the short run.



Short-Term Effects of Alcohol: The Initial High

When you take that first sip of an alcoholic beverage, you might feel a sense of relaxation or euphoria. This is because alcohol has a sedative effect on the central nervous system. It slows down the brain's activity, which can make you feel less anxious or more confident. Some people might experience a temporary boost in mood or sociability.

1. Impaired Judgment

As you continue to drink, your judgment becomes impaired. This means you might make decisions you wouldn't make when sober. For example, you might think it's a good idea to drive a car or engage in risky behaviors that you'd normally avoid.

2. Slurred Speech and Lack of Coordination

Alcohol affects your motor skills, making it difficult to walk in a straight line or speak clearly. Slurred speech and stumbling are common signs of alcohol's short-term effects.

3. Memory Blackouts

Have you ever heard someone say they don't remember what happened the night before after drinking? This is because alcohol can lead to memory blackouts. You might do things that you won't recall later.

4. Dehydration and Thirst

Alcohol is a diuretic, meaning it causes your body to lose more fluids. That's why you may feel very thirsty and wake up with a dry mouth after drinking.

5. Upset Stomach and Nausea

Alcohol can irritate your stomach lining, leading to feelings of nausea or even vomiting, especially if you drink too much too quickly.

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6. Mood Swings and Emotional Changes

While alcohol initially might make you feel happier, it can also lead to mood swings and emotional changes. You might become overly emotional, sad, or aggressive.

7. Hangovers

The next morning after drinking, you might experience a hangover. Symptoms can include headache, fatigue, sensitivity to light and sound, and overall discomfort. Hangovers can make you feel awful and regretful about your drinking choices.

8. Poor Sleep Quality

Though alcohol can make you feel drowsy and help you fall asleep faster, it disrupts your sleep cycle. You may wake up frequently during the night, leading to poor sleep quality.

9. Reduced Inhibitions

Alcohol can lower your inhibitions, making you more likely to say or do things you wouldn't when sober. This can lead to embarrassing situations or conflicts.

10. Increased Heart Rate

In some cases, alcohol can lead to an increased heart rate or palpitations, which can be unsettling.

While these short-term effects may seem manageable, it's essential to understand that excessive alcohol consumption can lead to dangerous situations and long-term health problems. Now, let's test your comprehension with some questions.

