**[Ronecia Nash](https://ashford.instructure.com/courses/75300/users/236230%22%20%5Co%20%22Author%27s%20name) Post to week 2 discussion 1**

The trend of mixing [alcohol (Links to an external site.)](https://www.therecoveryvillage.com/alcohol-abuse/) and caffeine became increasingly popular over the past few years. When alcohol is mixed with caffeine, the caffeine can mask the depressant effects of alcohol, making drinkers feel more alert than they would otherwise. As a result, they may drink more alcohol and become more impaired than they realize, increasing the risk of alcohol-attributable harms. The reason the alcohol and caffeine combination can be harmful is that caffeine can hide the depressant effects of alcohol. Alcohol is a sedative that slows down the central nervous system and brain processes. This effect is why people who drink may feel calmer or more relaxed. Caffeine, conversely, is a stimulant, and high doses can cause side effects like anxiety and nervousness (Advokat et al., 2018). However, caffeine may make you feel more alert than you would feel otherwise when drinking, yet you might not realize just how impaired you are. When you mix alcohol and caffeine, it also can keep you alert enough to drink for long periods. If you keep drinking, your blood alcohol levels can become dangerously high.

Caffeine hijacks this natural process by mimicking adenosine in the brain. It latches onto the receptors designed for adenosine, pushing them out of the way. As a result, we're left feeling more alert and awake (Advokat et al., 2018).  Eventually, however, adenosine wises up to caffeine's act and [makes new receptors for the sleep-inducing molecule to start latching onto again (Links to an external site.)](http://www.businessinsider.com/how-does-coffee-affect-your-brain-2014-8). As a central nervous system stimulant, caffeine doesn't just boost alertness, it can also improve your mood. Interestingly, [a number of studies (Links to an external site.)](https://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1105943) have [found a connection (Links to an external site.)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23871889) between caffeine consumption and a reduced risk of depression- especially when it's consumed in the form of coffee. Contrary to popular belief, caffeine cannot help you sober up. The [only way (Links to an external site.)](https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/caffeine-and-alcohol.htm) to get sober after drinking is to wait until your [liver (Links to an external site.)](https://www.therecoveryvillage.com/alcohol-abuse/repair-liver-alcohol-use/) breaks down and gets rid of the alcohol in your bloodstream. Studies showed that caffeine has no impact on this process. Therefore, drinking caffeine will not help you sober up. The most effective way to prevent alcohol withdrawal syndrome is to avoid drinking or drinking only in moderation.

 Reference

Advokat, C. D., Comaty, J. E., & Julien, R. M. (2018). [Julien's primer of drug action: A comprehensive guide to the actions, uses, and side effects of psychoactive drugs](https://ashford.instructure.com/courses/75300/modules/items/3809146) (14th ed.). Retrieved from https://vitalsource.com