



# Wine and Diabetes: Is a Drink Now and Then Okay?

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## Wine and Diabetes: Can Diabetics Drink Wine?

Cheers, Salud, Matzletov... whatever way you say it, many people like to imbibe in a toast with a great glass of wine now and then. But, if you're diabetic, you might be caught unaware and wonder if this is safe for you to do.

There's been a lot of conversation around this topic in recent years. Let's take a look at what some of the questions are and what the research all points us to do about wine and diabetes.

### **Does Wine Lower Blood Sugars?**

Does this mean I can drink all I want? That's certainly a tricky question. Here's what we know.

Drinks containing alcohol do tend to lower blood sugar. But, you have to remember that these drinks still have calories and not a lot of nutritious value.

So, you need to keep in mind that you are still adding calories to your diet and, since most type 2 diabetics could use to lose a few pounds, this isn't necessarily a great idea.

Also, you need to remember that with diabetes, your goal is to keep a relatively balanced blood sugar count throughout the day. Just like there are consequences and dangers of high blood sugar counts, the same applies to low blood sugars.

### **I've Heard Red Wine Is Good for Your Heart. Should I Have Some Every Day?**

There has been plenty of research showing that red wine is good for your heart. Red wine drinkers have seen their levels of HDL, or "good" cholesterol, rise a couple of points in studies and provide improved overall cardiovascular health.

However, that doesn't mean drinking wine is a good idea for everyone, especially if you are on insulin or have addictive tendencies. It's worth discussing with your doctor if you are a fan of red wine though. Be sure to ask them how much is appropriate.

### **Is It True That Diabetics Get Drunk Faster?**

The rate that a person's metabolism would hit a "drunken" stage is different for everyone whether they have diabetes or not.

The problem with drinking and diabetes is that the alcohol lowers your blood sugars. If they go too low, you might start experiencing symptoms like dizziness or slurring your words.

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Unfortunately, those are also symptoms of someone who has imbibed a little too much so you might be confused for being a bit tipsy when, in actuality, you might be having a diabetic reaction and need some help.

### **The Takeaway**

The bottom line is always to consult with your doctor and dietician on a plan specific to YOUR situation. If you and your medical team decide that it's OK for you to imbibe now and then, be sure to remember some basic common sense rules:

- **Don't drink and drive.** Enough said there.
- **Don't drink on an empty stomach.** It's important to have some food/snacks containing both carbs and protein while you have a drink to help keep that blood sugar more stable.
- **Make sure someone you are with knows you have diabetes** and warn them ahead of the low blood sugar symptoms. Even better, if you plan to drink on a regular basis, you might consider a diabetic ID bracelet.
- **Drink water** as well. It will help flush your system of any ill effects and keep you hydrated.
- Always **test your blood sugars** to be sure you are OK.

Having type 2 diabetes isn't always easy to navigate through. But, with a little creativity, knowledge and a great medical team, you not only survive but thrive.

Let us know how it goes and what you learn on your diabetic journey. In the meantime, cheers!