

Timeline of body effects after stopping drinking

<http://www.byrdie.com/what-does-alcohol-do-to-your-body>

Since childhood, we've been repeatedly warned of the cringe-worthy effects that too much alcohol can have on our bodies. (And since college, most of us have become all too familiar with them firsthand.) There's no denying that alcohol plays a major role in the life of most American adults. In fact, registered dietitian [Jenny Champion](#) says that more than half of us report drinking alcohol on a monthly basis. "Occasional drinking has been [said to improve health](#)," she says. "But frequent bingeing at happy hour with co-workers doesn't."

Not to freak you out, but according to biochemist Barry Sears, Ph.D.—creator of the [Zone diet](#)—alcohol's negative impact on the body can include everything from [inflammatory effects](#) on your organs to potential damage to your DNA. Drinking in excess can also put you at risk for certain cancers, diabetes, and liver disease, among other grim conditions. "Aside from the serious dangers of drinking too much, there are also a number of other not-so-pleasant effects," adds Champion, "including lousy moods, [crazy sugar cravings](#), excess calories, liver fat, poor sleep habits, dry skin, and foggy concentration."

We know, huge bummer. But here's a giant ray of hope: **Our bodies can actually bounce back from alcohol's negative effects at amazing speeds.** As in a matter of hours. And the longer you go [without drinking](#), the stronger and healthier your body and skin become.

Want to know exactly how long it takes for these benefits to kick in? With the help of Champion, we put together the following timeline of your body after that last glass of rosé. **To see the incredible things your body can do in the days, weeks, and months after you stop drinking, read on!**

1 Hour After You Quit

This is when **your body kicks into full-blown detox mode** to clear the alcohol from your bloodstream and prevent alcohol poisoning, says Champion. An hour after your last drink, your liver starts working overtime. Your pancreas also starts producing extra insulin, which causes intense [carb cravings](#).

12 to 24 Hours After You Quit

Your blood sugar finally normalizes. "However, if you went wild in the candy aisle during your 2 a.m. junk-food run, you may have kicked off a glycemic roller coaster that could last days," says Champion. Make sure to nip this in the bud by trading sugar and unhealthy fats for [fruits and veggies](#) on hangover day. "Also, because of the diuretic effect booze has on our bodies, you're going to be dehydrated," says Champion. So make sure to reach for a water bottle stat. A cute water bottle, like [this wood one by S'well](#) (\$35) always makes the hydration process easier.

48 Hours After You Quit

At this stage, **your body finishes its biggest detox hurdle.** "Depending on how much you drank, grogginess, [headaches](#), and [tiredness](#) might still be lingering," says Champion. But the worst is over. Pro tip: Treat any leftover headaches by dabbing some lavender, like this S.W. Basics [Lavender Essential Oil](#) (\$14), on your fingers and massaging your temples.

72 Hours After You Quit

Any **hangover side effects** are now officially out of your system. **Your carb cravings subside.** Champion says 72 hours after quitting is when "you finally feel back to yourself physically and mentally."

1 Week After You Quit

You start **sleeping more deeply**, causing your physical and mental energy to increase. Your skin begins to look **dewier and more youthful** as hydration restores. **Skin conditions such as dandruff, eczema, and rosacea begin to improve.**

1 Month After You Quit

Your liver fat reduces by 15%, increasing its ability to filter toxins out of the body. **You also notice a reduction in belly fat.** In addition, Champion says that the most significant improvement in your skin occurs at this four-week mark, according to a study published in *The International Journal of Cosmetic Science*.

One Year After You Quit

A year after your last drink, you lose a significant amount of belly fat—13 pounds, on average. **Your risk of mouth, liver, and breast cancers reduces.**

("On the financial side of the coin," Champion adds, "if you spent \$30 at each happy hour three times per week, at the one-year mark, you will have saved almost \$5000.")