

Alcohol

Alcohol is a depressant that works on the central nervous system to slow down the actions of the body and brain.

This affects athletic performance by:

- Slowing reaction times
- Reducing hand-eye coordination and motor skills
- Reducing accuracy and balance
- Reducing ability to concentrate

Alcohol also affects the body's ability to regulate temperature, making the athlete more heat sensitive and putting them at greater risk of suffering heat illness. Combining alcohol with other drugs can magnify the effects of alcohol or other drugs, which can be dangerous in many circumstances.

Side Effects

Side effects of alcohol include impaired judgement and decision making, slower reflexes and muscular coordination, slurred speech, double vision, memory loss, vomiting, incontinence, drowsiness and poor respiration.

Alcohol is also a diuretic which can leave the body dehydrated. Importantly, alcohol also delays the healing of injuries by increasing blood flow to the injured site resulting in swelling. Sports Medicine Australia recommends that if you sustain an injury, you should avoid alcohol for 2 - 3 days for optimum recovery.

Status In Sport

Alcohol (ethanol) was removed from the Prohibited List 2018. Athletes are encouraged to check with their specific sport as to how this change affects them.



Department of
**Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries**