



Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse  
Centre canadien de lutte contre l'alcoolisme et les toxicomanies

In partnership with



University  
of Victoria

Centre for Addictions  
Research of BC

## Alcohol and caffeine:

# A BAD BUZZ

### There are two types of caffeinated alcohol drinks

Caffeinated alcoholic drinks can be either pre-mixed by the manufacturer or hand mixed by the drinker or server. The government sets a limit on the caffeine content of pre-mixed drinks. If you mix your own drink, it's difficult to know how much alcohol or caffeine it contains. So the hand-mixed type can cause you more problems.

**So, what's the risk?** With caffeinated alcoholic drinks, the **caffeine fools you into thinking you're not as drunk** as you really are. The **caffeine also keeps you awake and maybe drinking longer**, increasing your risk of getting hurt, overdosing on alcohol or doing something else you might regret.

#### Compared to drinking only alcohol, mixing alcohol and caffeine increases the chance you will

- ★ be sexually assaulted or sexually assault someone;
- ★ drive drunk or get a lift from a driver who is drunk;
- ★ get injured or in a fight; or
- ★ not know how drunk you are.

#### Other nasty side effects include

- ★ dehydration;
- ★ puking;
- ★ hangover;
- ★ high heart rate and heart palpitations; or
- ★ alcohol poisoning.

### Safer drinking tips

Alcohol can harm how your brain and body develop. Ideally, you won't start drinking alcohol until you're at least legal drinking age. But if you choose to drink

- ★ avoid hand-mixed caffeinated alcoholic drinks; and
- ★ drink pre-mixed caffeinated alcoholic drinks with extreme caution.

#### Always:

- ★ plan for a safe ride home. Don't drink and drive;
- ★ use the buddy system. Keep an eye on your friends—and yourself;
- ★ have something to eat while you're drinking; and
- ★ have water or other non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated drinks in between alcoholic drinks.

