Headaches, hangovers and the holidays: Donâ€™t let an increase in holiday spirits ruin your holiday cheer

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

With the holiday season well under way, there is often an increase in family gatherings, office parties and outings with friends. This is also the time of year when alcohol flows more freely and the potential for a hangover increases.

According to a recent online survey conducted by the National Headache Foundation (NHF), 81% of survey respondents noted that they have experienced a hangover headache. Additionally, almost 79% of respondents plan on consuming alcoholic beverages this holiday season. For respondents whose headache hangovers are more prevalent during the holidays, 65% attribute these hangover headaches to an increase in occasions where alcoholic beverages are available.

Fortunately there are steps individuals can take to help avoid hangover headaches. According to NHF board member Dr. Lisa Mannix, â€œDrinking alcohol in moderation is key to avoiding a hangover. To help decrease the amount of alcohol you consume, try alternating alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages such as water, which will allow you to stay hydrated and provide your body additional time to process the alcohol.â€• Dr. Mannix continues, â€œAnother way to avoid a headache hangover is be sure and eat before and during the consumption of alcohol.â€• But if faced with a hangover headache, Dr. Mannix recommends taking ibuprofen to ease the pain of a hangover headache because it is gentler on the stomach than aspirin.

For many people even small amounts or certain types of alcohol, such as red wine, can trigger a headache. It

is important for individuals who are more sensitive to alcohol to try and avoid it entirely.

â€œTo help prevent headaches, it is essential to recognize your headache triggers,â€• says Suzanne E. Simons, Executive Director of the NHF. â€œOnce the trigger is identified, it can then be avoided. It is also important to discuss your headaches and their triggers with your healthcare provider because there are treatment options available.â€•

Additional highlights of the online survey include:

Â· For 69% of respondents alcohol is a headache trigger even if consumed in moderation;

Â· 31% of respondents found red wine to most frequently cause headaches;

Â· Stress due to family obligations (35%), time restrictions (35%) and travel (30%) may

cause an increase in alcohol consumption resulting in hangover headaches;

Migraine, tension-type or chronic daily headaches increase during the holidays as a result of financial restrictions (41%) and changes in weather (41%).

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