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Views of Drunk Driving May Change Once a Person Becomes Intoxicated

Drinking can change a person's view of intoxicated driving, according to a new study.

A person who normally disapproves of drunk driving may change their view once they have had a few drinks.

The study of 82 young adults compared their views on drunk driving twice: once when they were sober, and a second time after they drank a moderate amount of alcohol, HealthDay reports. After participants had been drinking and were coming down from their peak blood alcohol levels, they felt it was safer to drive than they did when they were sober and asked whether it would be safe to drive after having several drinks.

"We all probably know people who make good decisions about lots of things when they're sober, but put four or five beers in them and they make bad ones. So that part wasn't surprising," University of Missouri researcher Denis McCarthy said. "I was surprised, however, that it was such a big effect over and above their sober beliefs." He noted that when people are coming down from their peak blood alcohol level, they are typically driving home.

The findings are published in *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research.*

Mark B. Johnson, a senior research scientist at the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, noted in a journal news release, "The present research shows us that the sort of decisions people think they would make while sober may be different than the decisions they would make after drinking. If we want to understand how to change people's drinking and driving decisions in the real world, we need to study decision making under the influence of alcohol."

Drinking alcohol and driving simply do not go together. The human brain has to deal with many things and process countless data all the time. Alcohol affects attentiveness and one's ability to make quick decisions on the road, react to changes in the environment and execute specific, often difficult maneuvers behind the wheel. When drinking alcohol, driving becomes dangerous – and is potentially lethal! Read more about Drinking and Driving here.