What happens in your body when you drink alcohol?
- Your body considers it a toxin and wants to get rid of it
- Your liver starts working to break down the alcohol
- The liver stores sugar and can usually release some if your blood sugar is getting really low. But when it’s too busy processing alcohol, you have a higher risk of having a severe low blood sugar.
- Risk of low blood sugars can continue for 24 hours after drinking alcohol.

What’s your risk?
You are at risk of severe lows if you are taking insulin or certain diabetes pills (such as glipzide, glyburide, prandin...not metformin)

Top 10 Ways to Drink Safely:
1. Never drink on an empty stomach
2. Eat a carbohydrate meal or a snack while drinking
3. Don’t drink within 2 hours of exercise
4. Drink in moderation
5. Check blood sugar frequently
6. Do not take extra insulin to cover carbs in drinks...even sugary ones.
7. Wear your medical ID and drink with friends who know you have diabetes
8. Check blood sugar before going to bed. Have a carb snack if you’re lowish
10. NEVER DRINK AND DRIVE

What’s considered a drink? (it takes about 2 hours to break down one drink)
5-ounces of wine
12-ounce beer (light or regular)
1.5-ounce of liquor (vodka, whiskey, gin, etc)

*The staff of the Harold Schnitzter Diabetes Health Center does not endorse or encourage the consumption of alcohol for individuals under the legal drinking age of 21.