

Intoxicated people may react differently, and other approaches may be necessary. Sometimes it is easy to detect that a person is intoxicated; other times, it is barely noticeable.

Visible signs of intoxication can include:

- Changes in the size of their pupils
- Changes in behavior, such as unusually sluggish, giggly, or talkative
- Unusual movements

## Signs depending on the type of intoxication

It can be difficult to know which substances a person is under the influence of, or if it is multiple substances simultaneously. It is not important to identify the type of substance, but it is wise to have a basic understanding of how different substances affect behavior, which can, in turn, imply different ways to approach the situation.

It is common to distinguish between three types of substances, which affect behavior and speech in different ways:

1. **Stimulants:** The person is often characterized by agitation, restlessness, and impaired critical judgment, as well as rapid and unstructured speech.
2. **Depressants:** Affect coordination and balance and can cause slow and slurred speech.
3. **Hallucinogens:** Distort perception of reality and can cause the person to see/sense things that are not there.

## How to handle an intoxicated person

- Assess if you have the competence to handle the situation. If not, contact a competent colleague, security service, or police.
- It may be wise for only one person to engage in dialogue with the intoxicated person while others remain more passive but available.
- Prioritize your own safety.
- Always know where the emergency exit is and have an escape route ready.
- Try to keep some distance between you and the person and avoid physical contact.
- Try to use a calm voice and be aware of your body language. Calm is contagious.
- If the person should not be on the premises:
  - If it feels safe, politely ask the person to leave: "I'm sorry, but I have to ask you to leave, you are welcome to come back another day."
  - If the person behaves threateningly or refuses to leave, contact security or police.
- Have a low threshold for withdrawing from the situation.

## Call for medical help?

It is better to call one time too many. You should have a low threshold for calling emergency services. Call the medical emergency number (113) or police (112) if:

- You are concerned about an overdose or alcohol poisoning.
- The person seems unable to take care of themselves, e.g., is about to fall asleep, could wander off, fall over railings or hurt themselves.