

Cures for Hangover

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Hangovers can completely ruin your day. A bad hangover can make suicide seem like a reasonable treatment. Dizziness, severe nausea, throbbing headache, fatigue, weakness, sensitivity to light and noise, and just overall polluted and unhealthy feelings are the markers of a bad hangover. Even milder hangovers can be pretty miserable and debilitating. Finding a good cure for a hangover has therefore been a quest for regular drinkers for hundreds of years.

Because hangovers are so rotten, and because drinking has been so popular for so long, there are thousands of remedies that supposedly qualify as a cure for a hangover. I used to be a heavy drinker when I was younger, and I think I probably tried them all. Here's a quick run down on my experience looking for the best cure for a hangover.

First of all, there are some specific medications marketed specifically as cures for a hangover. These are basically combinations of painkillers, antacids, and caffeine. If you're suffering from a mild hangover, medications like these will probably help a lot. If you're suffering from a really bad one, they'll actually make you feel worse. I found that caffeine should be avoided at all costs for severe hangovers. Although coffee and caffeinated beverages are often touted as cures for a hangover, in the long run they'll serve to dehydrate you even more than you are already. Since a lot of the symptoms you are experiencing in a severe hangover are due to dehydration, you should avoid caffeine.

If you can keep them down, analgesics and antacids may help. They certainly aren't the magic cure for a hangover you are probably hoping for, but they may take the edge off. As for antacids, avoid using ones with calcium carbonate; try aluminum hydroxide, or acid reducers such as Zantac or Pepcid AC.

Once your nausea has subsided enough to keep down liquids, drink steadily and often. Don't drink too fast no matter how thirsty you are. A slow but steady intake of Gatorade or some other clear liquid always worked best for me. Rehydrating in this way is the best cure for a hangover that I was able to find. It takes some time, but once you've kept some fluids down for awhile you'll start feeling better fast.

Of course, the best cure for a hangover is not to drink so much in the first place. Preventive measures are always better than treatments. Don't drink on an empty stomach, and make sure you drink plenty of water or non-alcoholic beverages along with your booze.