I'm sure I was drunk, but I'm not sure if I had sex

Dear Alice,

I was really drunk and don't remember the night clearly, but I think I may have had sex. Now I don't know if I could be pregnant or not. I had never had sex before this. Help me please!

Answer

Dear Reader,

Your question brings up a couple of different issues, and certainly demonstrates that not remembering the events of an evening can be disconcerting. You were drunk, you may have had sex for the first time, you may or may not be pregnant, and you've taken a brave step by asking for help.

Here are some actions you can take to help you feel and be more in control:

- Depending upon your relationship with your partner, you may want to discuss what happened. Understandably, this might feel awkward and embarrassing, but the conversation could alleviate some fear, or at least help you to understand what happened and what steps you might decide to take. If you don't have a way to contact this person (or you don't want to), you could shift your attention toward doing your best to take care of yourself, body and mind.
- It's also a good idea to make an appointment for a gynecological exam with your health care provider, or at a clinic such as Planned Parenthood. There you will be able to discuss whether you had sexual intercourse, and determine if pregnancy and/or sexually transmitted infection (STIs) testing makes sense.

If this happened within the last five days (or 120 hours), emergency contraception (EC) is an option you have for pregnancy prevention. In the US, one-pill formulations of EC are available without a prescription and without proof of age on the retail shelves at many pharmacies and drugstores. To learn more about EC, check out Princeton University's emergency contraception website.

While the possibility that you are pregnant may be foremost on your mind, it's not clear from your question what this experience feels like for you emotionally. Perhaps over time, after reading this answer and gathering other information, your reactions and needs will change. In any case, you deserve support, access to resources, and an open ear. No matter what you decide to do or how you view what happened, talking with someone you trust may prove very
helpful.

Another difficult aspect of the situation to consider, is that it's possible your experience may have been non-consensual, considering that you were drunk and don't remember exactly what happened. There's also a possibility someone slipped a drug into your drink. This may be difficult to consider in addition to your other concerns, however there are people who can speak with you about this possibility. You may find it helpful to talk to a trusted counselor or psychologist. If you need one, your health care provider can give you a reference. Even if you're not sure how to describe the situation, a counselor may prove to be a valuable experience as you reflect on the experience. You can also call Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN) [4], a free, confidential, nationwide service that will connect you with resources in your area.

You may also want to think about how much you drank that night and how it affected you. Since alcohol is known to impair judgment, perception, and behavior, you may want to consider how much alcohol is reasonable for you to drink, so that you can relax and have fun while also being true to your values and decisions. Taking a look at some of the Q&As in the Go Ask Alice! Alcohol and Other Drugs [5] archives can help you to figure out your personal limits.

Sex, expectations, values, and desires can get mixed up, especially when alcohol is involved? sometimes in fulfilling and exciting ways, sometimes in unsettling, unclear, or even scary ways. Finding the physical and emotional support that you deserve will help you to process this evening and make plans for future decisions involving alcohol and sex.

Take care,

Alice!

Category:
Relationships [6]
Nonconsensual Relationships [7]

Related questions

Avoid hangover? [8]
Dinner does not equal sex [9]
Emergency contraception? [10]
Hangover helper and tips for healthy drinking [11]

Resources

Sexual Violence Response & Rape Crisis/Anti-Violence Support Center [12]
Medical Services (CUMC) [13]
Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) (Morningside) [14]
Medical Services (CUMC) [13]
Mental Health Service (CUMC) [15]
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