Everybody wants to have fun when they’re out on the town, but not knowing your limits or going overboard can lead to more than just a pounding headache and it can be dangerous. There are certain precautions you should take when you’re going out to the clubs to make sure that both yourself and your friends get home safe (if not sober). It can be the difference between passing out on your toilet at home and a trip to the hospital.

Planning it out
The first thing to do when you and your pals are going out for an evening is plan ahead. Having some forethought into what you’re going to do at the end of the evening before you’re stumbling around sensing everyone how much you love them can make a huge difference. Either determine who is the designated driver right off the bat, figure out a roommate’s home (or in his absence, ensure friends is actually still running when you plan to leave the club), or make sure you budget enough cash after food and beverages for a taxi. Any of these options are better than attempting to wander 70 blocks home to the car, drifting out of your hand. You can even phone a friend who lives close by and see if it’s okay to crash there. It’s also a smart idea to eat something before housing, so you’re not drinking on an empty stomach, and planning how much you’re going to drink at the start of the night can prevent you from going on a bender. A final word to the wise: charge your cell phone before leaving. Nothing sucks more than trying to call a cab and finding out your phone is a useless brick.

I got your back
When you’re out at a party, watch out for each other. If your friend starts slurring their lines or is swaying, it may seem funny to keep helping them more, but really, you’re just setting them up for trouble. Tell them to pace themselves; getting drunk is fine, but don’t be drowned so quickly that you don’t realize when you’ve went past the “I can still stand up, I’ll eat!” line and reached the “I have no idea what I’m talking about” line. Knowing your own limits and your tolerance is the best way to avoid getting to the point of alcohol poisoning (see adjacent).

Party or go clubbing with a group you trust.
While you may occasionally wake up with decked out lines on your face, you at least won’t be left alone at a random house party. You can also tell your friends when you start getting drunk to prevent you from having more drinks when decision-making becomes less inhibited. As well, while you shouldn’t ditch over someone like an overbearing mother hen, if one of your friends does try to go home with someone, make sure that they understand what they’re doing and that they’re still able to keep in touch with you, in case they run into problems.

Watch what you drink
If you happen to be a drinker out on a counter unattended or out of your line of sight, just buy another one when you come back instead of finishing it off. You may think it can’t happen to you, but drinking being dragged occurs more often than you might think. Similarly, be wary of drinking from punch bowls, which are much easier to spike. It’s far better to just stuff open a fresh drink or spend the money to order something else than end up in a situation where you could be taken advantage of.

However, date rape doesn’t require a drink to be drugged either, according to the majority of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre. Alcohol is the most common drug used. As well, according to a 2001 study, 21 per cent of U of A students reported having an unwanted sexual experience after the age of 14 said that the most serious instance happened while registered at the U of A. Signs that someone has consumed a date rape-drug such as Rohypnol (or “roopie”) is dizziness, feeling extremely tired, blacking out, difficulty standing and walking, and loss of memory. If you see such signs in a friend, get them out of the situation and to a hospital immediately.

If you ever find yourself in a bad scenario on campus, there are stainless steel emergency posts in certain areas of campus, as well as on the LRT platforms. Pressing the emergency button will alert Campus 5-0 to your location, which will then send officers your way, and certain pines will also blare a sound that will beck them knew your position and scare off any would-be offenders. If you’re not around one of those posts, remember that you can call 911. If you have a non-emergent complaint about someone while partying on campus, call Campus 5-9 at 492-5500.

Think and don’t drive.
By now, you’ve probably already had it drilled into your head that drinking and driving is completely avoidable, but the fact is impaired driving still kills a significant number of young adults every year. If you’ve been drinking at all, don’t drive, take a cab and get your car in the morning. Before you get, give a sober friend your keys so that you won’t even get the itching to drive when less conscious of decisions.

Your friends likely aren’t going to go justifying in your wheels (we won’t on “party with a group you trust”) so just give up your keys willingly. As well, take keys away from friends that you’re with if they’ve been drinking; they may get mad, or even try to fight you, but it’s better than them getting killed. And finally, never get into a car with someone you suspect of drinking; they probably have.

For future reference, here are some cab numbers to keep in your phone’s address book:

• Taxi: (987-9394)
Yellow Cab: 780-842-5454
Checker Cab: 780-438-5444
Barclay Cab: 780-849-2727

Step 1: Your fellow employee has passed out from boozing too much in the office. Make sure you place the arm closest to you straight out from the body, above their head.

Step 2: Grab and bend the person’s far knee. Gently roll them onto their side.

Step 3: Position the far arm with the back of the hand against the near cheek, gripping their head up from the ground. Tilt their head up slightly so that the airway is open. Make sure that the hand is under the cheek. This will keep their head elevated and prevent them from choking or swallowing vomit if they happen to throw up.