

DRINK TO YOUR HEALTH

There's nothing wrong with enjoying a cocktail or two from time to time, and if you mix in a few superfoods, it can serve as a nice source of nutrients that are good for your body.

So a lot of people – seriously a lot – say to me: “Russ, you’re so healthy. Do you drink alcohol?” Shoot, I’m having a beer while I’m sitting here writing this article. If I get writer’s block, I’ll probably have another.

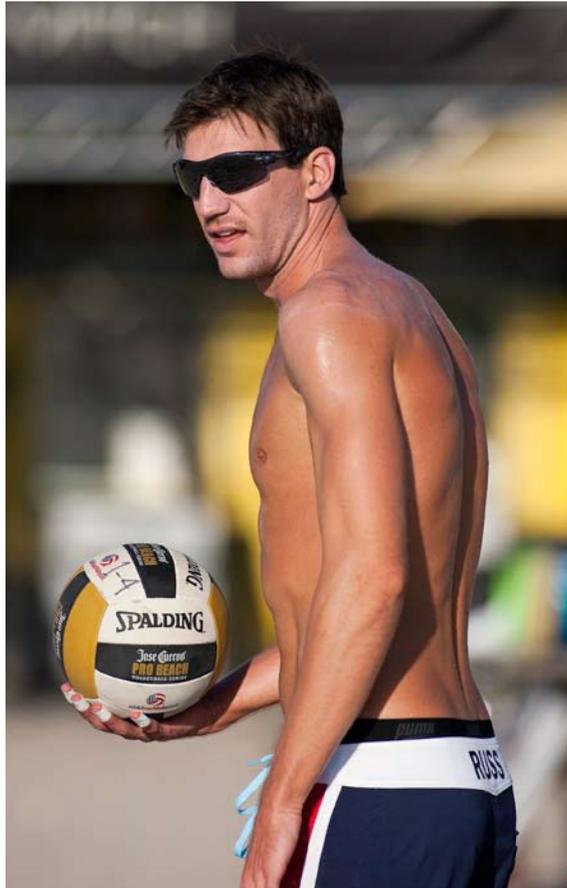
In the spirit of having fun this summer, I wanted to make good on a long-standing promise to those Body Blog readers who are over 21 that I would write about alcohol. Please don’t skip the boring part of what alcohol does to your body. It’s just as important to know as it is to splurge and enjoy yourself once in awhile, too.

Here are some alcohol ABCs. All alcohol is acidic to your body. Reference back to my alkaline vs. acidic lifestyle column in a previous issue or read it online. Basically, alcohol is a very simple sugar that digests and is acidic in your blood stream. In other words, it causes your body to release stores of minerals, mainly calcium, magnesium and potassium from your bones and fatty tissue. Their purpose is to neutralize this acid as your liver processes it out of your body.

Our livers are resilient, so as long as you don’t drink too much, too often, alcohol is not the cause of diseases, for the most part. Kind of like what I said in the last column – that the sun isn’t necessarily the cause of skin cancer. Alcohol isn’t necessarily the cause of liver or kidney disease. It’s a symptom of a damaging lifestyle that includes your whole diet and the environment you’re in.

The calories are generally the most damaging parts of alcohol, assuming you’re drinking in moderation. They add up quickly, and we all know what that leads to. Alcohol is a basic sugar, which has four calories per gram. Some beer companies tell you how many “carbs” their beer has, but that doesn’t account for the calories from the alcohol. Wine generally has more alcohol and fewer calories. Hard liquor has even more alcohol but the fewest calories of the group. For conversation’s sake, think 150 to 200 calories per beer, 125 to 150 calories for a glass of wine and 100 to 125 for a shot of liquor.

Okay, onto the fun! Let’s talk about some of my favorite recipes. You all know by now that I am really into superfoods. Superfoods are calorie for calorie the most nutrient dense foods on the planet. I’m not talking about spinach and broccoli, which are definitely good for you. I’m talking about cacao, maca, goji berries, maqui berries and



Russ Marchewka hopes to have a few victories to toast.

wheatgrass.

Did you know that you can not only make unique tasting alcohol drinks, but you can super charge them with antioxidants and phytochemicals? You’ll be the talk of the neighborhood if you serve these at the BBQ or next get-together.

Here are three of my favorite mixed drinks:

Violet Lemon Drop Martini

- 2 oz vodka of choice
- 1 oz fresh lemon juice
- water to taste
- 1 tsp of maqui berries

The maqui berries add a deep purple color to the martini in addition to a little flare. It ends up being like a deep violet color. The seeds will sink to the bottom, giving the martini a unique look and amazing taste. Maqui berries are native to South America and have more antioxidants than any discovered food on the planet. Tip: You can substitute a white rum for the vodka.

Honeydew Wheatgrass Margarita

- 1 tsp of wheatgrass powder
- 3 cups frozen, cubed honeydew melon
- 2 tsp fresh lime zest
- 3 tbsp lime juice
- 8-12 ounces coconut water
- 4 oz tequila
- 1 cup ice

agave, stevia or coconut sugar to taste

Wheatgrass is amazingly high in vitamins, minerals and is highly alkaline (to help combat the acidic effect of the alcohol). I recommend stevia if you want zero calories, but I love coconut sugar for sweetness. It’s high in potassium and B vitamins and has a much lower glycemic response when compared to regular sugar or sugary syrups with high fructose corn syrup.

Disclaimer: I took this one from Navitas Naturals Superfoods

Protein Packed Pina Colada

- 2 oz white rum
- 8 oz coconut milk
- 4 oz coconut water
- 1 cup frozen pineapple
- 1/2 serving Growing Naturals Vanilla rice protein
- 1 cup ice

Looking to party after that tough workout at the gym? Coconut milk contains medium chain fatty acids that have growth hormone factors in them. In other words, they give your body the building blocks to build lean muscle and burn fat. Coconut water has a good amount of electrolytes to combat the dehydration of drinking. The rice protein is the silkier and most digestible around. It’s sweetened with a touch of stevia, so it won’t add extra calories, but it gives you the high-quality protein and slow digestive release that helps maintain energy and build muscle.

I would be remiss if I didn’t talk about my favorite – beer. I LOVE good beer, and beer does contain some antioxidants. My favorite is a Tavern Spruce Ale from Yards Brewing Co. in Philadelphia, which I visit every Belmar/Seaside Heights tour stop. You won’t find me shy away from a BJ’s Jeremiah Red, Stone Pale Ale or almost anything from New Belgium Brewing in Colorado. Here’s to a fun summer filled with superfood cocktails. Cheers!

Feel free to share recipes of your own or pick up some superfoods and connect with me online at www.WorldHealthHub.com/shop. 🍷