Public Abstract
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Individual differences in hangover deserve study because they could be markers of important traits or processes such as loss of control, impulsivity, tolerance, or acute inflammatory responses. Research on hangover has been sparse, and this may be attributable in part to the fact that the field lacks well-validated instruments for measuring hangover. The Hangover Symptoms Scale (HSS) is a promising instrument developed to assess the frequency of 13 hangover-like symptoms experienced after drinking in the past year (Slutske et al., 2003). Cross-sectional analyses in a sample of college drinkers (Slutske et al., 2003) showed preliminary evidence for the validity of the HSS. The current investigation extended this work by examining whether HSS scores forecast which individuals experience a hangover in the 2-3 weeks after the questionnaire was administered. In two ecological momentary assessment (EMA) studies (Ns = 129 and 404), participants carried electronic diaries to track their daily experiences. Each morning, the diary assessed any drinking behaviors from the prior night, the presence of hangover that morning, and current levels of hangover symptoms. Taking sex and number of drinks in the episode into account, the HSS forecasted endorsement of hangover in diary records in the larger sample only. A variety of analyses assessing whether the HSS identifies individuals who are especially susceptible to hangover produced mixed results. Findings are discussed in terms of their implications for the practical use of HSS scores in hangover research, the interpretation of HSS correlates, and the need to develop additional measures of individual differences in hangover susceptibility to advance hangover research.