

Tips on cutting down...

- Consider drinking a non-alcoholic drink to quench your thirst before having alcohol



- Alternate non-alcoholic drinks with alcoholic ones

- Pace yourself – enjoy a drink slowly. Set yourself a limit and stick to it
- Try to eat when you drink, it helps you to drink less, but avoid salty snacks which increase thirst



- Reduce the number of days when you drink more than 1-2 units
- Go out to the pub or club later in the evening
- Resist pressure from people who encourage you to drink more – it's your health you are looking after!
- Avoid drinking in rounds or in large groups
- Switch to low alcohol beer/lager
- Take smaller sips and avoid 'top-ups' so you can keep track of your units
- Plan activities and tasks at those times you usually drink



drinking and explore interests – cinema, exercise etc

- Avoid going to the pub after work
- Avoid or limit the time spent with 'heavy' drinking friends

What to do next...

Think about making some changes; but before you set some goals consider the following:

Benefits of changing?

.....



Benefits of staying as I am?

.....

Do the benefits of changing seem stronger? If they do, read on. If they don't, you may not be ready to make changes yet.

SMART Plan...

- Whilst reading this leaflet you may have thought of some changes that you could make - why not record them here.
- Try to make one small change at a time.
- If you make your goals 'SMART' - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed, they are more likely to really happen!

Examples of 'SMART' goals;

...starting this Friday, and for the next month, I will go to the pub at 9:00pm instead of 8:00pm and my first drink will be an orange juice

...instead of sharing that bottle of wine with my partner tonight, I'm going to go to the cinema instead

Your 'SMART' goal;

.....

This document is available in other formats. Call (01209) 313218



ALCOHOL



How much is too much?

Alcohol is so widely used that we sometimes forget the harm it can cause to our physical and mental health. Doctors agree that drinking more than the **sensible limit** damages health in the short & long-term.

So how can we enjoy our drink and stay healthy?

What targets should you aim for?

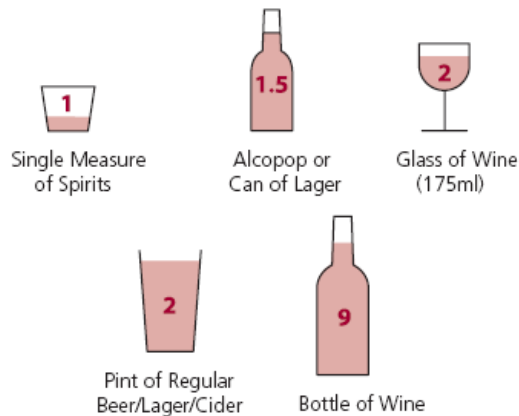
Men

No more than 3-4 units of alcohol a day

Women

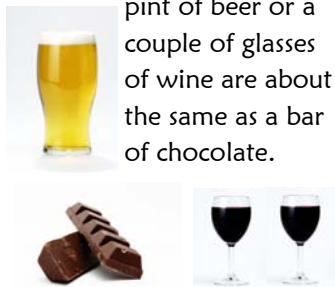
No more than 2-3 units of alcohol a day

How many units does your drink contain?



Did you know?

Alcohol is high in calories. A pint of beer or a couple of glasses of wine are about the same as a bar of chocolate.



Did you know?

If you have a heavy drinking session, it is best to avoid alcohol for 48 hrs to give your body time to recover.



Find out if you're drinking too much...

For the following questions please circle the answer which best applies.

1 drink = 1/2 pint of beer or 1 glass of wine or 1 single spirits

1 MEN: How often do you have EIGHT or more drinks on one occasion?
WOMEN: How often do you have SIX or more drinks on one occasion?

Never Less than monthly Monthly Weekly Daily or almost daily

2 How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because you had been drinking?

Never Less than monthly Monthly Weekly Daily or almost daily

3 How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected of you because of drinking?

Never Less than monthly Monthly Weekly Daily or almost daily

4 In the last year has a relative or friend, or a doctor or other health worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down

No Yes, on one occasion Yes, on more than one occasion

Scoring the quiz...

Score questions 1, 2 and 3 as follows:

Never = 0
Less than monthly = 1
Monthly = 2
Weekly = 3
Daily or almost daily = 4

Score question 4 as follows:

No = 0
Yes, on one occasion = 2
Yes, on more than one occasion = 4

Total score =

If you scored more than 3 then this suggests you are drinking more than is recommended.

Drinking more than is recommended has its risks; such risks are highlighted in the 'Effects of drinking too much..' section.

If you scored 3 or more use the 'Tips on cutting down' and 'What to do next...' sections over the page or look at the local and national links for further information and help.

Effects of drinking too much...

Short-term risks include:

Anxiety
Loss of consciousness
Slowed breathing and heartbeat
Sexual difficulties such as impotence
Skin problems and premature ageing



Long-term risks include:

Increased risk of heart disease & certain types of stroke
Certain types of cancer, especially breast cancer
Memory loss, brain damage or even dementia
Liver disease, such as cirrhosis & liver cancer
Becoming overweight or obese
Stomach ulcers

Where to get more information...

Locally

AddactionCada - (01872) 263001
Your local **GP surgery**

Nationally

Drinkline - 0800 917 8282 (open 24 hours)
National Drugs Helpline - 0800 77 66 00
Alcoholics Anonymous - 0845 769 7555
NHS Direct - 0845 4647
Drinkaware - www.drinkaware.co.uk