

Alcohol information

- What are safe limits of drinking?
- Is your drinking a problem?
- Should you be concerned?

Not sure? Then read this leaflet for more information



Does this look like a normal evening?

Many people in the UK consume alcohol. Some people become dependent on it without realising.

Alcohol misuse can affect you and others around you. It can also damage your health; for example, it can lead to depression, liver disease, alcohol related accidents, acute pancreatitis and other health and social problems.

How much is too much?

Men and women should not drink more than 14 units per week. It is advisable to spread these out over three or more days and to have at least two consecutive days a week without alcohol. Men and women drinking more than six units in one session is considered binge drinking.

What is a unit?

One unit is 10ml of pure alcohol. Your body takes around one hour to process this amount of alcohol, removing it entirely from the bloodstream, although this varies from person to person. Examples of one unit of alcohol is half a pint (284ml) of 3.5% beer, lager or cider, one small glass (125ml) of 8% wine or one single measure (25ml) of 40% spirit.

I feel fine though...

Many alcohol related diseases are not immediately obvious and may develop over time, such as high blood pressure, cirrhosis (scarring of the liver), some types of cancer and heart disease.



Dependent drinking

Sometimes people become dependent on alcohol. This means that they feel unable to function without alcohol.

Signs and symptoms that you may be suffering from alcohol withdrawal include:

- Hand tremors
- Seizures
- Irritability
- Sweating
- Depression
- Restlessness and insomnia
- Nausea
- Anxiety
- Hallucinations

Should I stop drinking altogether?

If you are dependent on alcohol it could be dangerous to stop drinking suddenly, without medical assistance.

If you drink too much, think about cutting down on the amount you drink and increasing the number of alcohol-free days you have. Immediate benefits of this are that you may start to feel more energetic, have improved mood and be a healthier weight. If you regularly drink more than 14 units a week, try these simple tips to help you cut down:

- **Get the free app from Drinkaware** - track your alcohol consumption and spend over time. Calculate units and calories and set goals to help you moderate your drinking.
- **Eating isn't cheating** - food helps slow the absorption of alcohol, stopping it going to your head too quickly and helps protect your stomach lining.
- **Smaller is better** - make your units go further by having bottles of beer or halves instead of pints and choosing a smaller glass for your wine. Buying spritzers or shandies will also help keep that unit count down.

- **Make space** - sipping a soft drink between alcoholic drinks slows down the rate of your drinking and means you'll drink less over the course of the evening. Go for a non-alcoholic 'mocktail', a premium soft drink or a glass of water.

How many units?



Pint of
regular
4% beer



Alcopop
or can
of lager



Can of
5% cider
(500ml)



Single measure
of spirits
(25ml)



Bottle
of 13%
wine

If you are concerned about your alcohol consumption contact:

Forward Leeds (alcohol service)

0113 887 2477 www.forwardleeds.co.uk

Alternatively look at the information available on these websites:

www.nhs.uk/oneyou

www.alcoholchange.org.uk

www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support

You can also speak to your GP who will be able to help.