

Alcohol

Why Cutting Down Counts

Gastroenterology

Introduction

This leaflet has been given to you as part of the hospitals commitment to reduce alcohol related harm in our city.

We hope it will provide some information and brief advice to enable you to drink healthily and gain support if needed

What are the facts?

Did you know that Wolverhampton has significantly higher than the national average number of alcohol related problems and deaths. We are therefore committed to asking all patients about their alcohol use and giving this leaflet to anyone who may benefit. It includes information on units of alcohol and the advantages of cutting down. We hope you find it informative.

Did you know that the recommended number of units of alcohol for men and women is 14 units per week and is equivalent to 7 pints of average-strength beer or 6 standard glasses of wine? If you are pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant, the safest approach is to avoid alcohol completely to keep risks to your baby to a minimum.

Different drinks and glass sizes, from shots to pints, means that it is not always easy to know how many units are in your drink. The number of units in a drink is based on the size of the drink, as well as its alcohol strength.

Type of drink	Number of alcohol units	
Single small shot of spirits * (25ml, ABV 40%)	1 unit	 1.5 Alcopop or a bottle of regular lager
Alcopop (275ml, ABV 5.5%)	1.5 units	
Bottle of lager / beer / cider (330ml, ABV 5%)	1.7 units	
Can of lager / beer / cider (440ml, ABV 5.5%)	2 units	 3 Pint of strong or average lager or cider
Pint of lower-strength lager / beer / cider (ABV 3.6%)	2 units	
Standard glass of red / white / rosé wine (175ml, ABV 12%)	2.1 units	 2 Pint of regular strength lager or cider
Pint of higher-strength lager / beer / cider (ABV 5.2%)	3 units	
Large glass of red / white / rosé wine (250ml, ABV 12%)	3 units	
Cider 7.5% 1 litre	7.5 units	
Strong lagers 8-9%	4 - 4.5 units per can	

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

Drinks and units

One unit of alcohol is the amount the average adult can process in an hour. For example, a pint of 5.2% lager contains 3 units of alcohol, taking 3 hours to process. A 750ml bottle of red, white or rosé wine (ABV 13.5%) contains 10 units, taking 10 hours to process. See the guide above to find out how many units are in your favourite tippie.

*Gin, rum, vodka, whisky, tequila, Sambuca. Large (35ml) single measures of spirits are 1.4 units.

Benefits of Cutting Down



Psychological / Social / Financial	Physical
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved mood• Improved relationships• Avoid risks of drink driving• Save money	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sleep Better• No Hangovers• More Energy• Lose Weight• Improved Memory• Better Physical Shape• Reduced Risk Of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Injury– High Blood Pressure– Liver Disease– Cancer– Brain Damage

Regularly drinking more than 14 units of alcohol a week risks damaging your health.

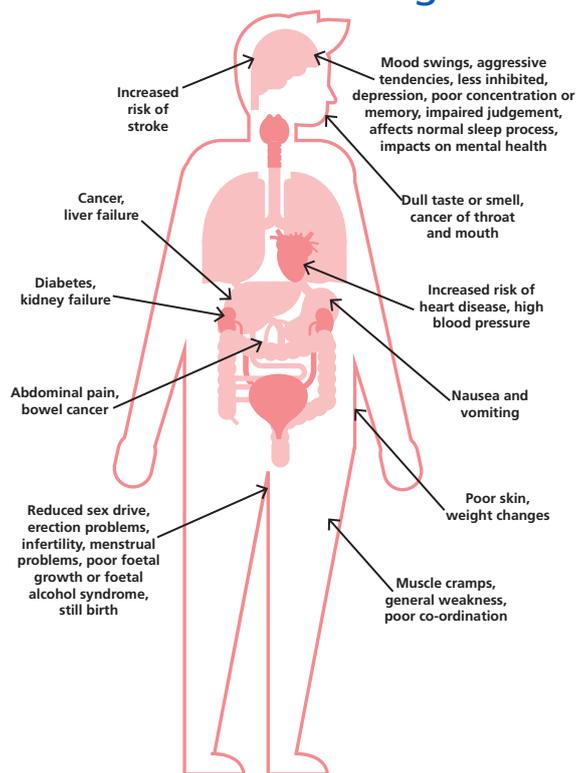
New evidence around the negative health effects from regular drinking has emerged in recent years. There's now a better understanding of the link between drinking and some illnesses, including a range of cancers.

The previously held position that some level of alcohol was good for the heart has been changed. It is now thought that any benefits are minimal and outweighed by the health risks.

No 'safe' drinking level

If you drink less than 14 units a week, this is considered low-risk drinking. It is called "low risk" rather than "safe" because there is no safe drinking level.

Health problems associated with increasing alcohol intake



There is also evidence that regular drinking at high-risk levels can make your mental health worse. The effects of alcohol on your health will depend on how much you drink. The less you drink, the lower the health risks.



Lower Risk	For men and women, 14 units or fewer a week spread over 3 or more days	Common effects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased relaxation • Sociability
Increasing Risk	Regularly drinking more than 15 units a week	Increasing risk of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low energy • Memory loss • Relationship problems • Depression • Insomnia
Higher Risk	For men, more than 50 units a week For women, more than 35 units a week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impotence • Injury • Alcohol dependence • High blood pressure • Liver disease • Cancer

'Single session' drinking

Drinking too much too quickly on any single occasion can increase your risk of:

- Accidents resulting in injury, causing death in some cases
- Misjudging risky situations
- Losing self-control, like having unprotected sex or getting involved in violence.

To reduce your health risks on any single session:

- Limit how much you drink
- Drink more slowly
- Drink with food
- Alternate each alcoholic drink with water or non-alcoholic drinks.

Keep track of how much alcohol you are drinking and when you are drinking it.

- A diary is a useful way of recording this and will help you work out times when you might be drinking too much, for example a night out with certain friends or after a bad day at work
- You can track your drinking using the MyDrinkaware app and receive personalised tips and feedback to help you cut down your drinking: www.drinkaware.co.uk/register
- Work out the number of units you are drinking. This is a more accurate way of looking at your alcohol intake than the number of drinks you have had. For example, you may think you have done well by only having two glasses of wine but this could be as much as six units of alcohol depending on the size of the glass and the strength of the wine
- The following link allows you to calculate the number of units and calories in your drinks: www.drinkaware.co.uk/understand-your-drinking/unit-calculator.

Is it safe to cut down?

For people who are drinking above 8 units daily, it may not be safe to suddenly stop or rapidly reduce alcohol intake (there is a risk of dangerous side effects from withdrawal if people who are drinking above 8 units a day, suddenly stop)

We recommend speaking to an alcohol professional if you are drinking above 8 units a day.

Contact details are on the back of this leaflet for your local service.

Cutting down your alcohol use

If you are drinking too much and you want to cut down you can make some simple changes that will help:

- On the days that you plan to drink, set yourself a limit and try to stick to it
- Do not drink on an empty stomach
- Eating before you drink will make you feel full more quickly and therefore likely to drink less
- Start drinking later in the day; set a time and try to stick to it. Equally, it may help to set a time when you will stop drinking
- Look at the strength and size of your drink. Try having a smaller glass, adding a mixer or choosing a drink with a lower alcohol content
- Try not to drink in rounds; pace yourself rather than trying to keep up with others
- Alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.
- If you want to cut down, it will help to think of some alternatives to drinking alcohol
- Try to have at least two alcohol free days each week
- Instead of drinking alcohol, plan to do something else you enjoy like going to the cinema or gym, phoning a friend or meeting up for a coffee
- If you tend to drink alcohol at home, think of some alternative non-alcoholic drinks that you could have instead
- If you tend to drink alcohol when you go out with friends, it can help to volunteer to give people a lift so that you have a good reason not to drink.

Count your drinks here:

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/tools/unit-and-calorie-calculator>
or if you prefer a paper version, write your units in here

Day	Drinks	Units
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		
Total for the week:		

Further help and information



Do you think you may be drinking too much? If so, speak to your nurse or doctor to discuss your concerns. There is help available at New Cross Hospital. Ask to speak to our Alcohol Liaison Nurses. They would be very happy to come down and see you on the ward.

The **NHS website** is a good general resource for information about health conditions and healthy lifestyles. There is a section about alcohol and the effects on health, including where to find support. Website: www.nhs.uk/livewell/alcohol

Drinkaware provide a range of information regarding the health and social impact of alcohol. There are useful on-line tools and apps including a unit and calorie calculator and drink tracker. Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk/

Alcohol Change UK provides information and advice for people whose lives are affected by alcohol. Website: www.alcoholchange.org.uk/

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is an international mutual aid movement. It provides self-support for people experiencing alcohol problems. The website can be used to locate a meeting local to you. Helpline: 0800 9177 650; Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Calling **Drinkline** on 0300 123 1110 – a free, confidential helpline

Breaking Free – A free website where you will get personalised support:
<https://breakingfreeonline.com>
Log in using code Wolves37

Contact details for local alcohol professionals

Wolverhampton

Hospital Team: 01902 694079

Community Team Adults: 0300 200 2400

Community Team Young People: 0300 123 3360

Website: www.recoverynearyou.org.uk

Email: bsmhft.recoverynearyou@nhs.net

Staffordshire 01785 270080

Stoke 07773 471926

Dudley 01384 426120

Walsall 01922 669840

Shropshire 01743 294700

Birmingham 0121 227 5890

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。