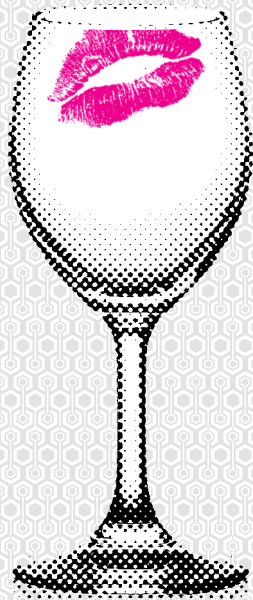


WOMEN & ALCOHOL

ALCOHOL & HEALTH - INFORMATION & ADVICE

YOUR HEALTH // ALCOHOL UNITS // YOUR APPEARANCE
THE BIG NIGHT OUT // DRINKING AT HOME





WOMEN & ALCOHOL

A drink on a night out, or at home after a hard days work, can help you relax.

However, getting carried away and drinking too much, too often, can lead to all kinds of problems.

The information in this booklet will explore these issues and help you understand the harm that can be caused by alcohol and keep you safe.

BODY DIFFERENCES

Men really are from Mars and women from Venus when it comes to alcohol, because alcohol has a different impact on women's bodies than it does on men's.

Women's bodies generally weigh less and have proportionally more fat than men's (sorry girls, but it's true) Women also have less body fluid to dilute the alcohol, so it travels around the body in a more concentrated form and causes more harm.

RECOMMENDED LIMITS

Government guidelines state that the alcohol limit for men and women is the same. Both should not regularly drink more than 14 units per week to keep health risks from drinking alcohol low.

If you do drink up to 14 units a week, it's best to spread these evenly across a few days and to have at least two drink-free days a week.

KNOW YOUR UNITS

WHAT IS A UNIT?

In every alcoholic drink a certain percentage of the liquid is alcohol (Ethanol). This is referred to as ABV or Alcohol By Volume (percentage). So that you can measure or count the amount of alcohol in a drink, it is divided into 'portions' of alcohol called units.

One unit of alcohol is 10 millilitres of alcohol by amount.

Typically, a half pint (284 ml) of 4% lager would contain one unit (10ml); a standard glass (125ml) of 12.5% wine would be 1.5 (15ml) units.

You can keep track of your alcohol intake by adding up these units.

A unit of alcohol is always the same amount, no matter what you're drinking.

WORK OUT YOUR UNITS

There are calculations you can do to work out the units in each drink, but all alcohol packaging in the UK has a label, similar to the one on the left, that tells you how many units are contained in each drink and what is the percentage of alcohol.

You can also work out the number of units in a particular drink by applying a formula, which you can find at the bottom of the facing page. To save you the bother of getting the calculator out, we have given you the units in some of the most popular drinks.

Know your limits

This bottle contains
6 glasses

Units of alcohol
per 125ml glass
and 75cl bottle



Government guideline

Do not regularly exceed:

Women & Men

2 units daily

Seek medical advice regarding
alcohol and pregnancy
www.drinkaware.co.uk



LAGER

PREMIUM LAGER	5%
330ml bottle	1.7 units

STANDARD LAGER	3.8%
Half Pint	1.1 units



WINE

WINE	12-13%
125ml glass	1.5 units

WINE	12-13%
750ml bottle	9.5 units



SPIRITS

VODKA	40%
25ml glass	1 unit

VODKA	40%
350ml half bottle	14 units

BACARDI	37.5%
25ml Glass	1 unit

WKD	5%
275ml bottle	1.5 units



CIDER

STANDARD CIDER	4.5%
568ml bottle	2.5 units

DIAMOND WHITE	7.5%
275ml bottle	2.1 units

WOODPECKER	3.5%
330ml bottle	1.2 units

*Multiply the volume of the drink (in ml) by the % abv (percentage of Alcohol by Volume) and divide it by 1000
For example: The number of units in a 330ml bottle of lager with a 5% abv is: 330×5 divided by 1000 = 1.7 units.*

EFFECTS ON YOUR BODY

Drinking more than the recommended guidelines can have negative effects on your body, and can lead to increased risk of:

- > Weight gain
- > Liver failure
- > Liver & other organ damage
- > High blood pressure
- > Depression
- > Fatigue
- > Sexual problems
- > Stomach ulcers

These risks increase with the amount and frequency with which you use alcohol.

PREGNANCY



CONTRACEPTION



The advice around drinking during pregnancy can be confusing. Conflicting advice from different organisations seems to change on a regular basis.

It isn't clear at what level of alcohol the risk of miscarriage or damage to your baby increases, but it is recommended that you should avoid alcohol during the first three months of your

pregnancy and afterwards drink only two or three units, two to three times a week.

The more you drink the more risk for you and your baby. Increased alcohol intake can put your baby at risk of Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, leading to problems such as:

- > Miscarriage
- > Low birth weight
- > Facial deformities
- > Learning difficulties

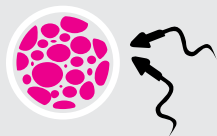
Alcohol does not affect the chemical effectiveness of the pill. But, if you get drunk you could vomit the pill up or forget to take it on time which will make some types of pill less effective.

The pill also affects the levels of hormones in your body which makes it more difficult

for your liver to break down the alcohol, leading to higher blood alcohol levels.

You can use emergency contraception to prevent pregnancy after having unprotected sex, or if a method of contraception has failed. See your GP, Family Planning Clinic or pharmacist immediately.

TRYING TO CONCEIVE



Alcohol disrupts the menstrual cycle and can stop a woman from ovulating.

If you are trying for a baby, try cutting down your units gradually.

BREAST CANCER



Large scale studies have concluded that drinking alcohol regularly over a long period increases the risk of breast cancer, the most common form of cancer in women.

MEDICATION



Because a woman's alcohol levels can reach a higher concentration than that of a man, you are more at risk of adverse reactions to medicines. Mixing alcohol with certain medications can make these harmful and toxic

YOUR PERIODS



During your period, changing hormone levels affect the speed at which your body breaks down alcohol.

Reduce your drinking each day, and have a few alcohol-free days a week.

Ask your partner to cut down as well. Drinking impairs sperm count, and heavy drinking can cause temporary impotence.

You're more prone to breast cancer if you have a family history of breast cancer.

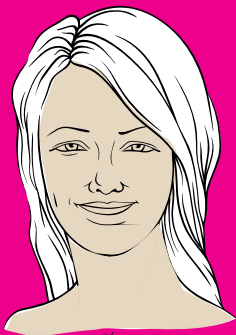
Drinking within the recommended limits and not drinking everyday will help you reduce the risks.

to your body, and can cause:

- > Breathing difficulties
 - > Internal bleeding
 - > Nausea and vomiting
 - > Drowsiness and Fainting
- Always check with your GP or pharmacist, or check the label on the packet.

This leads to higher blood alcohol levels meaning you will feel the effects faster and for longer than normal

YOUR APPEARANCE



ALCOHOL AND YOUR SKIN

The more you drink the more water your body loses. As well as peeing more, your liver and kidneys use more water to process the alcohol.

As your body struggles to breakdown alcohol and rid itself of toxins, instead of flushing them out, it circulates them around your bloodstream!

This will leave you dehydrated and your skin looking tired and dried out. If your liver function is affected it becomes more difficult to process vitamins effectively, vital for that healthy glow.

ALCOHOL AND YOUR WEIGHT

Drinking too much alcohol can make you fat. Alcohol contains seven calories a gram - nearly the same as a gram of fat!

In fact some glasses of wine can contain as many calories as a packet of crisps.



BINGO WINGS & MUFFIN TOPS

Take a look at our biscometer below and work out approximately how many calories you drink on a night out with your friends or crashing on the couch with a bottle of wine.

White & Red Wine 13.5% (750ml bottle).... 600 kCal



White & Red Wine 13.5% (175ml glass) 140 kCal



Lager 4.6% (330ml bottle) 139 kCal



Sambuca 38% (35ml shot)..... 127 kCal



Bacardi & Coke (175ml) 129 kCal



Lager 3.8% (284ml - half pint)..... 91 kCal



YOUR BIG NIGHT OUT!

It's been a long stressful week and you deserve to relax. A night out with your friends sounds like just the thing. What could go wrong? The following advice will help stop things going wrong and make your big night out as enjoyable and safe as possible.

If you have to drink before you go out, make them low alcohol and space them out with soft drinks.

Pre-loading, or having a drink before you go out can make you more vulnerable to accidents, or to becoming a victim of crime. If you have to drink before you go out, make them low alcohol and space them out with soft drinks. Turning up to a club already hammered could mean you will be refused entry, or thrown out for being a pain.

Set yourself a limit

Decide how much you are going to drink and only carry enough money for that number of drinks and your taxi or bus fare home.

Eat something before you start drinking

Having some food in your stomach before you start drinking will help your body release the alcohol at a steady pace. While you are out have some bar snacks between drinks.

Keep an eye on your drink

Don't accept drinks from someone you don't know. Try to drink from a bottle rather than a glass, as it is more difficult to spike a drink in a bottle. Be alert. If you think your drink may have been spiked tell someone you trust straight away.



Have a spacer

Mix your drinks with soft drinks to make them last longer. Have a shandy or mix your wine with soda or lemonade. Or alternate between alcoholic and soft drinks.

Don't get into rounds

Getting into rounds can increase the pressure to drink more. Instead, have a kitty that you all throw into at the beginning of the night. Decide on your limits and stick to them.

Miss a round

If you do get into a round it doesn't mean you have to have a drink in every round. Say no, or miss yourself when it's your turn.

Go for lower percentage alcohol drinks

Some premium lagers, beers and ciders can have almost twice the alcohol content as the normal alternatives. Stick with lower percentage alcohol drinks.

Slow down

Sip your drink, and put it down on a table where you can see it. Standing with your drink in your hand means you will end up drinking it quicker.

Keep an eye on each other

Don't let someone who is very drunk go off on their own. Always tell someone where you are going and who with. If one of your friends passes out when drunk, make sure you put them on their side and call an ambulance. Make sure you tell them when, and how much, they have been drinking.

Mixing alcohol and other drugs

Taking alcohol with other drugs is very risky, as the combination produces effects that are difficult to predict. The combination of alcohol with other drugs (including cannabis) can lead to increased risk of passing out - or worse!

Getting home safely

Save some money for a bus or taxi home. Never get in an unlicensed taxi or into a car with someone who has been drinking; you are putting yourself in danger. Pre-book a cab or call a licensed taxi. If you have to walk home, try to walk together. Stay on well-lit roads and don't take short cuts across dark and deserted streets and parks. Keep enough credit and charge in your phone to call for help if you feel in any danger.

DRINKING AT HOME

The way we drink has changed over the past few decades as more and more of us are home drinkers. But drinking at home means the



measures we pour ourselves are usually much larger than we'd get in a pub. If you like a drink at home, here are a few things to think about that might help you cut down:

- Don't buy alcohol as part of your 'weekly shop'. The temptation to drink more is all too easy.
- Try to resist special offers like 'three bottles for £10'. The more alcohol you have in the house, the more temptation there is to drink it.
- Don't drink every night. Try to keep alcohol for a weekend or special occasion treat.
- Don't drink because you are bored. If there's nothing you fancy on TV, switch it off. Read a book, play with the kids, go to the movies or theatre - or try some other form of entertainment.
- Check the label and buy lower ABV or units drinks than you'd usually go for.
- Try to plan when you will buy alcohol. Half the fun of, say, having friends round is preparing the food and choosing the right drinks to get in.
- Be careful about how much you pour yourself. Use a smaller glass or use a measure to pour out an exact amount of alcohol, like they do in a pub.

HELP AND SUPPORT

If you feel your drinking is getting out of hand, consider talking to someone; maybe a close friend, partner or a local support service. Below are some organisations that can also help you:

DRINKAWARE

Drinkaware aims to increase awareness and understanding of the role of alcohol in society, enabling individuals to make informed choices about their drinking.

www.drinkaware.co.uk

DRINKLINE

Drinkline offers information and self-help materials, help to callers worried about their own drinking, support to the family and friends of people who are drinking and advice to callers on where to go for help.

Call 0800 917 8282. Mon-Fri 9am-11pm

Drinkline is a confidential service and no names need be given.

DRINK SMARTER

Your relationship with alcohol changes over time. Whether your partying days are ahead of you or behind you, you'll find lots of useful information on this website.

www.drinksmarter.org

TALK TO FRANK

National drugs awareness site for young people and parents/carers. 24 hrs a day, seven days a week.

Call 0800 77 66 00 (calls are free and confidential)

www.talktofrank.com

ADDACTION

UK - wide treatment agency, helping individuals, families and communities to manage the effects of drug and alcohol misuse.

www.addaction.org.uk