



Talking about Alcohol

Alcohol plays an important role in many societies. A small amount of alcohol (eg. a glass a day of red wine) has been found to have positive health benefits. However, the negative effects of drinking excessively can be serious both in the short and long term, to you and others around you.

You may not be aware of just how much you are drinking over a week. Look at the standard drink conversion below and work out how much you've drunk over the last week. If it's above the recommended amounts (see box) you are likely to be putting your physical and mental health at risk.

One Standard Drink is:



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1 glass of wine
(100mls at 12% alcohol)

1 mid strength beer
(375ml of 3.5% alcohol)

1 Nip of spirit
(30mls 40% alcohol)



MEN

0- 4* standard drinks a day
Maximum of 6* standard drinks a day.
1-2 Alcohol-Free days a week
Maximum of 28 standard drinks in a week.

WOMEN

0- 2* standard drinks a day.
Maximum of 4* standard drinks in a day.
1-2 Alcohol-Free days a week
Maximum of 14 standard drinks in a week



****These drinks should be spread over several hours. For example, men should have no more than 2 standard drinks in the first hour and 1 per hour after that. Women should have no more than 1 standard drink per hour.***

Number of Standard Drinks in commonly consumed drinks:

Average restaurant serve of wine (180ml of 12% alcohol wine) = 1.8

Schooner of full strength beer (375ml of 4.9% alcohol beer) = 1.5

Premixed spirits (375ml of 5% alcohol premixed drink) = 1.5

Tips for Controlled Drinking

- Always start with a non-alcoholic drink, and then alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.
- If you drink beer, change to drinking a lower alcohol version (mid-strength) or alternate with full-strength beer.
- When drinking wine with a meal, always have a glass of water as well. Drink from each throughout the meal.
- NEVER quench your thirst with alcohol
- ALWAYS have a drink of water first
- Sip drinks, taste each mouthful, don't gulp
- Put your glass down between sips and take hands off the glass.
- Make sure you've eaten before drinking, or if drinking over a prolonged period eat as well.
- Drink with others, not alone
- Finish each glass before refilling. This way it's easier to keep an eye on how much you've had. Beware the attentive waiter/ friend!
- Plan a drinking session (How much is my limit? How long will I stay?)
- Consider how much you want to spend before you start (What's my budget?)
- Don't get involved in 'shouts' or 'rounds'. You're more likely to drink more and spend more money than you wanted!
- Encourage alternative options: (How do I want to spend my time? Do I want to be here? Can I meet my friends elsewhere?)



Remember, if going out for a drink **DON'T DRIVE.**
Get a lift, get a taxi, or walk. Keep yourself and those around you safe.