

Cutting back: What you can do

Reducing the amount you drink can have many benefits. As well as helping you avoid cancers, liver damage and other serious problems it can also help you keep your weight in check. It can also mean more money to spend on other things and improve your motivation and focus.

So to help you cut down, why not try...

- **Counting** how many units you drink in a week so you can see if you're having more than the recommended amounts
- **Swapping** your favourite tipple for something new like a smoothie or a fruit juice
- **Drinking water** or juice between each alcoholic drink – that way you drink less and stay hydrated
- **Doing something different** such as going for a walk at times when you'd normally be having a drink
- **Using smaller glasses** as a small glass of wine contains around 1 units where as a large one contains 3 units (based as 12% ABV)
- **Working out** how much you've spent on alcohol over a week or month then thinking what else you could have spent the money on.

Finding out more

If you'd like to know more about how drinking affects you and ways to cut down visit these websites:

www.drinkaware.co.uk

www.nhs.units.uk

Getting help

If you think you that your drinking has become a problem and need some help, advice and support contact:

The Alcohol Liaison Nurse Service
01253 303943

Hospital Public Health Team
01253 303967

drink less

see more of life

It's time to think about what you drink...

Many of us enjoy a drink from time to time. Enjoying a glass of wine or a beer at home or out with friends can be a good way to unwind and enjoy yourself.

But for some of us, the pleasant effects of alcohol can lead to us drinking more than we should do, which over time can lead to a number of health problems.

ALCOHOL KNOW YOUR LIMITS

**SHOULD NOT
REGULARLY EXCEED**

MEN
3-4
UNITS DAILY

WOMEN
2-3
UNITS DAILY

So what damage can drinking too much do?

The immediate effects of excess alcohol are well known and drinking too much can cause dizziness, headaches, nausea and sickness. And because of the way alcohol impairs our responses, drinking too much can put us at increased risk from accidents.

However, looking at the long term, drinking too much can lead to problems such as:

- Cancers including mouth, throat and breast cancer
- Liver damage
- Heart problems
- Kidney problems
- Mental health problems
- Fertility problems
- Weight Gain
- Problems with the stomach and intestines

Did you know...

...alcohol is high in calories and by drinking 3-4 Gin & Tonics a day over four weeks you could put on as much as 4lbs.

What should you be drinking?

Alcohol is measured in units and the amount of units different drinks contain is printed on bottles and cans. A pint of bitter normally contains around two units and a pint of strong lager around 3 units while depending on the size and strength a glass of

wine can contain between 1 and 3 units.

As a guide, the NHS recommend that men should drink no more than 3-4 units a day, while women should drink no more than 2-3 units. However, more than one in four men and one in seven women regularly drink more than these amounts and many of us actually underestimate the amount of alcohol we're drinking.

Did you know...

...the recommended safe daily alcohol amounts for are 3-4 units for men and 2-3 amounts for women. You should also aim to give yourself 2 alcohol-free days a week.

Could you be drinking too much?

Drinking too much alcohol on a regular basis can cause you to depend on alcohol in the same way others are addicted to drugs.

Although drinking heavily doesn't necessarily mean you are an alcoholic, if you have got into the habit of regular heavy drinking or binge drinking and you're tired of waking up with a hangover then you should cut back before your health and wellbeing is affected.

Did you know...

...although drinking may give you a high, alcohol is a depressant that affects your central nervous system and slows down your reactions.