

## Why should I cut down?

I might avoid the big disasters such as sexual assault, unwanted pregnancy police record, accidents and injuries (to me or by me) but also I might:

- Lose weight and feel fitter
- Have an improved mood and more energy
- Save money (*how much would that be for you?*)
- Sleep better
- Skip the hangover
- Hang on to brain cells – and my dignity!
- Get less grief from family and friends who may be worried
- Avoid accidents, injuries, fights and STIs
- Stop having memory blackouts
- Be more attractive to hang out with
- Be in control
- Stop feeling guilty
- Be more reliable (appointments/work etc)

**And in the long term prevent future health problems.**

## Up for changing things a bit? What steps could I take?

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## Where to go for help:

Your GP surgery or public health nurse at your school or college.

### Useful websites:

[www.units.nhs.uk/](http://www.units.nhs.uk/)      [www.drinkaware.co.uk/](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/)  
[www.knowyourlimits.info](http://www.knowyourlimits.info)

# How much is too much?



**Aim to have two/three alcohol free days per week**

**Be in control of your health and well-being.**

# ALCOHOL

# How much is too much?



## Three ways to assess your risk

### This is what you say you are drinking

1. Average number of binges per week

*A binge is drinking more than 6 (for a woman) or 8 (for a man) units per day.*

and/or  
2. Average daily consumption  units per day

*Total weekly consumption divided by 7.*

and/or  
3. AUDIT score

### This is your risk level

- Lower risk  
 Increasing risk  
 Higher risk

### How do you feel about this?

The risks from regularly drinking over recommended daily limits are a little different from the risks from occasional binge – but the more often you have binges the more likely you will be to increase your regular drinking risks.

## Binge drinking/getting drunk Why does it matter to me?

Drinking too much in **ONE** session – you've got a lot to lose

### You are more likely to:

- suffer from bad moods, get into arguments or even fights
- hurt yourself physically (5 times more likely to be involved in an accident)
- be involved in sex you or they regret (the next day, or in nine months time!)
- be involved in sexual assault (mostly it is people you know that carry out sexual assault, not strangers)
- catch a sexually transmitted infection, eg chlamydia
- lose your self respect and dignity
- lose your judgement
- lose/ruin your possessions - that new outfit, the mobile phone, your money, handbag
- end up in casualty or police cell
- lose thousands of your precious, irreplaceable brain cells
- feel like crap the next day

## Having a great night out, and feeling good about it the next day

### You might find these things help...

- Eat before you go out, or eat during the evening
- Drink water regularly - rehydration will help prevent a hangover the next morning
- Use soft drinks to pace yourself - a tonic looks just like vodka
- Remember, alcohol will do nothing for your looks - you're drop dead gorgeous until you drop down drunk
- Don't accept drinks from strangers, never leave your drink unattended
- Carry a condom, if you plan to possibly do more than kiss.
- Don't tank up before you go out.
- Don't take your credit/debit card/as much money out with you
- Start drinking later

## Regularly drinking too much – what can I expect? (NB Regularly = all or most days of the week)

drinking level	AUDIT score	young men	young women	common effects if this is how you usually drink over a few months or more			
Lower risk	0-7	No more than 3-4 units per day on a regular basis	No more than 2-3 units per day on a regular basis	• relaxed	• sociable	• feeling good, having a laugh!	
Increasing risk	8-15	More than 3-4 units per day on a regular basis	More than 2-3 units per day on a regular basis	<b>The more you drink above lower risk level, the greater the risk of:</b>			
Higher risk	16-19	More than 8 units per day on a regular basis or more than 50 units per week	More than 6 units per day on a regular basis or more than 35 units per week	increased risk ↓	• depression and increased stress	• all those calories make you fat	• dangerous with street drugs and mucks up prescription drugs
					• insomnia and less energy	• relationship difficulties, work problems and family problems	• judgement affected, getting into risky situations
				• skin looks rubbish	• alcohol dependence	• liver disease	
				• gut problems and poor diet	• breast cancer in women and other cancers in everyone	• high blood pressure/heart attack/stroke	
				• memory loss, blackouts			