

# Alcohol – cutting down.

Are you drinking above the recommended guidelines? There's a good chance that you are...

According to the national charity Drinkaware, over 30% of women and 40% of men in the UK regularly drink above the recommended guidelines.



## Ideas to help you cut down.

- Here are some ideas others have found useful for cutting down:
- Go out a bit later, or just have your first drink later
- Replace some of your drinks with non-alcoholic or low alcohol drinks
- Avoid the quick drink situation - missing out the one at lunchtime, or after work, can make a huge difference over the week
- Have at least two alcohol free days a week
- Take up a new interest, sport or maybe go to the cinema if you find most of your social life revolves around the pub
- Drink longer drinks - beer rather than spirits and drink more slowly
- If you drink at home, buying beers and wines with lower alcohol content could make a great difference
- Decide on a limit at the start of the evening
- Buy smaller glasses for the home, or buy a drinks measure
- Keep a supply of non-alcoholic alternatives for drinking at home and entertaining
- Tell others you are cutting down and avoid rounds
- Find other ways of relaxing - exercise or relaxation techniques for example
- If you anticipate a heavy evening, avoid drinking on an empty stomach and make sure someone else is driving
- Avoid 'topping up' your drink as it's harder to keep track of how much you're drinking

## Benefits of cutting down.

Immediate benefits of cutting down include:

- Feeling better in the mornings
- Increased energy
- Better concentration
- Your skin may start to look better
- You'll start to feel fitter
- You may stop gaining weight
- Improved mood
- Better quality sleep

## Longer term benefits.

Alcohol is linked to seven different types of cancer:

- Bowel cancer
- Breast cancer
- Laryngeal cancer (voice box)
- Liver cancer
- Mouth cancer
- Oesophageal cancer (food pipe)
- Pharyngeal cancer (upper throat)

Cancer Research UK advise that every year alcohol causes 4% of cancers in the UK, around 12,800 cases.

The less alcohol you drink, the lower the risk of cancer. No type of alcoholic drink is better or worse, it's the alcohol itself that leads to the damage. And drinking alcohol increases the risk of cancer whether you drink it all in one go or a bit at a time.

Giving up alcohol will also help your liver and reduce the chances of developing liver disease.

## Safe drinking guidelines for men and women.

You're advised to not drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis.

Spread your drinking over three or more days if you regularly drink as much as 14 units a week.

Try to have several drink free days each week.



Find out if you're drinking too much with drinkaware's quick and simple online test:

[drinkaware.co.uk/selfassessment](https://drinkaware.co.uk/selfassessment)