



HOSPITAL AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ALCOHOL TOOLKIT

Information, Guidance and Advice.
Helping build a healthier lifestyle.

ALCOHOL
and you

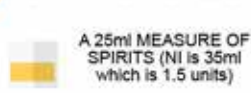
IS IT TIME
FOR A
CHANGE?

Introduction

Being in an emergency department or hospital is never fun. It can be even more embarrassing if your drinking is the reason you are here. In small amounts alcohol can help you to relax, feel more confident and be more sociable but drinking can damage physical and mental health. Is it time for change?

Do you know how much is too much?

This is **1** unit of alcohol...



THERE IS NO COMPLETELY SAFE LIMIT OF DRINKING

This means you **should not drink more than 14 units per week.**



That may sound like a really small amount but these calculations have been worked out by health professionals and experts looking at the impact of alcohol.

Know your weekly limit in units and measures



Remember any decrease helps!

ALCOHOL FACTS

- Alcohol is one of the leading causes of accidents, leading to many injuries and deaths.
- Because alcohol is a depressant, it slows down the brain and affects the body's responses.
- Alcohol is the world's no. 1 risk factor for ill health and premature death within the 25 - 59 age group
- It costs £50-£90 per visit to the ED departments
- Alcohol misuse costs N.Ireland in the region of £800m per year

How much are you drinking on an average week?

INSERT YOUR UNITS BELOW AND TOTAL UP

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	TOTAL
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Is alcohol affecting your mental health?

YES NO

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Was your mood affected on any of those days?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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On a scale of 1 (not important) to 10 (extremely important) please circle

How important is it for you to improve your mental health?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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The Alcohol Screening Tool

ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS AND ADD THE TOTALS IN THE END COLUMN.

QUESTIONS	SCORING SYSTEM					Your score
	0	1	2	3	4	
How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never	Less than monthly	2-4 times per month	2-3 times per week	4+ times per week	
How many units of alcohol do you drink on a typical day when you are drinking?	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-9	10+	
How often have you had 6 or more units if female, or 8 or more if male, on a single occasion in the last year?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily	

What does your score mean?

A total of **5+** indicates increasing or higher risk.

Your Score total:

Potentially your drinking could be considered harmful. If your score is **8** or over it could suggest its becoming more of a problem and there is a potential for dependence.

Remember any decrease helps!

Do you ever experience any of the following negative effects...

SOCIAL

- (PLEASE TICK)
- Arguments
 - Strained relationships
 - Work/school problems
 - Regrets of things you have done

MENTAL HEALTH

- Depression
- Low mood
- Memory loss
- Anxiety
- Aggression
- Making unwise decisions

Health effects on the body

Aggressive, Irrational behaviour, arguments, violence, depression, nervousness and anxiety

Alcohol dependence
Memory loss

Cancer of throat & mouth

Premature ageing, Drinker's nose

Frequent colds. Reduced resistance to infection. Increased risk of pneumonia

Weakness of heart muscle.
Heart failure. Anaemia.
Impaired blood clotting.
Breast cancer.

Liver damage

Vitamin deficiency. Bleeding
Severe inflammation of the stomach. Vomiting.
Diarrhoea. Malnutrition

Trembling hands, tingling fingers numbness, painful nerves

Inflammation of the pancreas

Ulcers

Impaired sensation leading to falls

In men:
Impaired sexual performance

Numb, tingling toes.
Painful nerves

In women:
Risk of giving birth to babies with abnormalities and/or low birth weight babies

Tips on cutting down on alcohol

WATCH HOW MUCH YOU DRINK

Set a limit and count your units when you have a drink

LEAVE CASH CARD AT HOME

Leave your cards at home, that way you can't drink more than your budget allows.

BEWARE OF ROUNDS

Be confident and say to your friends that you are buying your own; that way you can pace yourself.

EAT UP

Snacks between drinks can help to slow down the absorption of alcohol and helps you stay in control.

HOME MEASURES

Buy an alcohol measure to help keep track of your intake at home.

MAKE SPACE

Alternate alcoholic drinks with a non-alcoholic drink such as a soft drink or just a glass of water.

DE-STRESS DIFFERENTLY

Try not to make alcohol key to winding down after work and try some alternative stress-busters like exercise.

ASK FOR SUPPORT

Tell friends / family that you're trying to cut down, they might be more supportive than you think.

So what is my next step?

Get feedback about your drinking may be a start.
Have a look at our website at

www.alcoholandyouni.com

Several other things people find helpful:

- Keep an eye on your drinking through a drinks diary
- Think through the reasons you want to change.
- Make a firm committed decision to change.
- Make a plan: how are you going to do it
- Prepare for difficult situations
- Get support

So what do you want to do?

- Change nothing / I don't have a problem
- Drink less / Avoid problems
- Stop drinking / Alcohol is not worth the hassle

Many trips to the emergency department can be avoided if alcohol is part of the reason you are there.

How does that sound to you?



Alcohol is a contributing factor to over 60 medical conditions.

Where can I get support?

There are a wide range of early intervention, treatment and support services in place throughout Northern Ireland.



Visit Drugs and Alcohol NI www.drugsandalcoholni.info and click on the 'Services Near You' section you will find a range of search options to help you find the most appropriate source of support closest to you. It is also worth noting that a number of services can offer advice and one-to-one support to family members regardless of whether the person they care about is ready to get help or not – these services are also featured on the website.



Another useful website is

ALCOHOL
and you

www.alcoholandyouni.com which features a range of online information on alcohol as well as a number of alcohol tools within their 'Resources' section. It's main feature is the online alcohol self help course that can let you help yourself at your own pace with a drinks diary, unit checker and more.

You can of course also speak to your GP, or any other healthcare professional, who will be able to offer you information and advice and who may also signpost or refer you on to relevant services for more intensive support.

In Crisis? Lifeline

24/7 CRISIS RESPONSE HELPLINE
0808 808 8000

HSC Public Health
Agency

Project supported by the PHA

NI Dacts
DRUG & ALCOHOL

"Addressing drugs and
alcohol together"

ALCOHOL
and you

"Working together to reduce
alcohol related harm"

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