

Tips to help cut down

- Take part in drink-free activities that you enjoy: going to the gym, playing football, etc
- Think about your triggers to drink – could it be financial worries, health concerns, loneliness or boredom? Could you talk to others about your worries and concerns, to find a way to reduce the burden of worries you're carrying?
- Avoid people and places that you associate with drinking
- Don't have drink in your home
- Avoid drinking alcohol if you're feeling ill, depressed, bored, anxious or lonely
- Keep within low-risk weekly limits
- Keep a drink diary – how much you drank and when and how you felt afterwards

Reviewing your drinking

Sometimes it's worth taking some time out to think about how we drink.

You might find you're happy with how you drink and might not want to change. You might think your drinking is OK but still would like to experience the health and physical benefits of cutting down. Or you might find yourself uncomfortable when you think about your drinking, for example, how you act, mood changes, coping with the "comedown" afterwards or lying/deliberately underestimating your drinking if asked about it.

If you are uncomfortable with your drinking, then talk to your GP. S/he will be able to offer you information and advice, and refer you to the support or service best suited to your needs. Talk to family and friends who you think could be of help.

The Alcohol Action Ireland Alcohol Service Finder will provide you with a list of alcohol supports and services in your area. Go to www.alcoholireland.ie for more information or visit www.drinkhelp.ie or www.alcoholhelp.ie.



www.drinkhelp.ie or www.alcoholhelp.ie

MEN & ALCOHOL: MAKING THE DRINK LINK



Your health and alcohol

For many of us alcohol is something we enjoy - we use it to unwind, to celebrate, to commiserate and when socialising with friends. If you do choose to drink, there are a few key facts that are good to know:

- Alcohol is high in calories. For example, there are around 240 calories in a pint of lager, and about 340 in a cheeseburger - you do the maths....
- Drinking affects your physical performance, even in small amounts - drinking larger amounts will affect your ability to think and act fast, making you a weak link in any team games
- Drinking can have a negative effect on your sexual performance, increasing the risk of impotence
- One in ten cancers in men is caused by alcohol
- The link between alcohol and suicide has been well established - four times the number of men as women die by suicide

- One in four deaths of young men aged 15-34 is due to alcohol
- It's important to avoid alcohol if you're coping with depression and/or anxiety - alcohol is a depressant and can cause you to feel more depressed and/or anxious



Some benefits of cutting down

- Healthier skin - alcohol dehydrates the skin, dilates small blood vessels and can make it look red and blotchy
- Better performance on and off the pitch
- Improved mental health
- Better sleep
- Increased energy
- More money
- Lower risk of cancers
- Lower risk of stroke and heart disease
- Better able to manage your weight

How much is too much?

The guidelines for low-risk drinking are up to 21 units a week for a man, spread over the course of a week with at least 2/3 days alcohol free.

What does this mean?

