

A young persons guide to



HELP

CHANGE

ALCOHOL

Here are a few

FACTS

You may not know!

FRIENDS

POSITIVE

FAMILY

SUPPORT

www.nhsggc.org.uk

MAKING SENSE OF ALCOHOL

Despite the fact that it's not recommended for under 18's to drink alcohol, some young people still choose to do so. However, there are some things that influence how alcohol affects young people and it can be more than just the alcohol itself.

Drinking alcohol can increase the likelihood of young people:

- Having arguments with friends or getting into a fight
- Having to go to A & E or being admitted to hospital overnight
- Having an injury that needs to be seen by a doctor
- Being taken home by or in trouble with the police
- Staying off school, work or college
- Being sick

More than half of 15 year olds say that at least one of these things has happened to them.

FACT:

Alcohol acts as a depressant

SEX

Alcohol can give you false confidence and make you less embarrassed. This can lead to unplanned or unprotected sex, which can result in unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

How does alcohol affect our day to day life?

When drunk, you often behave in ways you wouldn't normally. This can put you in all sorts of embarrassing or risky situations. Here are some examples:

RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Drinking affects your judgement. It can often lead to arguments, fights and fall outs, and sometimes to aggression and violence.

Too much alcohol can lead to memory blackouts. This can be scary if you can't remember what happened when you were drinking.

When drinking alcohol your reactions slow down and your vision is affected. This can make you more prone to accidents and falls.

EMOTIONS

Alcohol can make your emotions more intense. It can make you feel giggly and happy when in a good mood but it can make you feel down and depressed when in a low mood.

MYTH: EVERYONE DOES IT

Not everyone drinks and more young people are choosing not to

LOOKS

Alcohol can give you bad skin and might make you put on weight.

MEMORY

EDUCATION AND WORK

Drinking can make you late or miss days in school, college or work. It can also affect your concentration.

ACCIDENTS

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Being drunk makes you more vulnerable and puts you at risk of being attacked, mugged or robbed.

COMMITTING A CRIME

If you are charged by the Police, this may affect you in the future with getting a job or travelling to certain countries.

Alcohol and Your Health

Alcohol works by getting into your bloodstream and then travelling to your brain. It is a depressant drug and slows everything down (breathing, reactions and judgements). This begins to happen within 5 minutes or so.

Alcohol affects everyone differently and things like age, gender and size influence how much alcohol you can drink and how quickly you get drunk. Your liver has the job of removing all the alcohol from your body but in young people under 18, the liver has not fully matured so isn't as effective at getting rid of the alcohol and as a result, can get damaged more easily.

UNIT CALCULATOR

Alcohol is measured in **units**.

UNITS	DRINK AND VOLUME
11.25	Standard (750ml) bottle of Buckfast
22.5	A (3 litre) bottle of Frosty Jack Cider
10.5	Standard (750ml) bottle of 20/20 Mad Dog
1.7	Standard (330ml) bottle of beer (5% strength)
28	Standard (700ml) bottle vodka
1.5	Standard (275ml) bottle alcopop

The number of units in a drink depends on the strength of alcohol and the amount.

How many do you drink?

The recommended daily guidelines of alcohol units are 2-3 units per day for adult females and 3-4 units per day for adult males with at least 2 alcohol free days each week.

FACT:

The sensible drinking guidelines only apply to people aged 18 or over. It's recommended that under 18's don't drink alcohol

ALCOHOL AND CALORIES

Alcohol is loaded with what's called 'empty' calories, meaning that they don't provide your body with any goodness like calories from food but instead they can make you put on weight. See how many calories are in the following drinks:

WHAT'S IN THEM

Standard (750ml) bottle Buckfast is the same as **4 doughnuts**

A 3 litre bottle Frosty Jack cider is the same as **6 hamburgers**

Standard (330ml) bottle beer is the same as **half a tin of spaghetti in tomato sauce**

Standard (700ml) bottle vodka is the same as **four chicken burgers**

Standard (275ml) alcopop is the same as **a large packet of crisps**

TOP HINTS AND TIPS

Drinking alcohol can make you take risks you wouldn't normally take when sober and can lead to much more than a bad hangover.

Drinking too much means you run the risk of having problems with the police, getting into trouble with your parents, or seriously harming yourself and others. What might seem funny the night before probably won't be so funny in the morning.

The effects of alcohol on young people are not always the same as they are on adults.

STAYING SAFE

Know the advice: The sensible drinking guidelines only apply to people aged 18 or over.

Eat before: Eating a meal before drinking can help slow down the absorption of alcohol and protect your stomach lining.

Top up your phone before you go out: Make sure that you have enough credit in case you need to contact someone.

Drink smarter: If you choose to drink alcohol, try to drink slower and make sure you drink soft drinks or water in between the alcoholic ones. This will help keep you hydrated.

Keep an eye on your drink: Drinks left unattended can be spiked with alcohol or drugs.

Stay with friends: Look out for each other. If someone passes out:

- Put them in the recovery position on their side
- Call 999 and ask for an ambulance. Tell them where you are. If you're worried about getting into trouble, you can do this anonymously



- When help arrives, tell them everything you know, what your friend has been drinking or any drugs they may have taken and when

GETTING HOME

Get home safely:

- Plan how you're getting home
- Make sure that someone knows where you are
- Keep enough money for a taxi and always make sure that it's a licensed cab
- If you're getting a lift, make sure that the driver hasn't been drinking
- If you are walking home, try to stay together and stick to well lit areas
- Know the local transport links and how you can get home from wherever you are

It is against the law:

- To drink in a public place like on the street or in a park
- For someone under 18 to buy or attempt to buy alcohol
- For an adult to buy or attempt to buy alcohol on behalf of someone under 18
- To sell alcohol to someone under 18
- To be drunk in charge of a child under 7 in a public place

THE LAW

CONTACT DETAILS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

If you would like to find out more or talk to someone about your drinking, or someone else's drinking or any other problem you may have, talk to someone you trust, your GP or contact any of the services below:

GCA'S Young People Counselling
and Groupwork Service

0141 353 1800

www.glasgowcouncilonalcohol.org

RADAR

0141 889 1223

DACA

0141 952 0881 / 01389 731456

Healthier Inverclyde Project

01475 715357

Childline 0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

www.getthelowdown.com



Greater Glasgow
and Clyde