

Alcohol

Alcohol comes in a wide range of drinks with different alcoholic strengths, colours and tastes. Alcohol often has labels with useful information, such as how many units are in the drink. All labels are required by law to display the strength of the drink

Spirits usually contain a much higher concentration of alcohol than wine or lager and are normally drunk in smaller measures. Ready-to-drink 'mixers' and 'alcopops' may not seem to be strong drinks but they may contain more alcohol than typical bottles or cans of beer or cider.

There is no completely safe level of drinking, but by sticking within these guidelines, you can lower your risk of harming your health. To keep the risk of harm from alcohol low, men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than **14** units a week.

How does it make you feel?

Just enough can make you feel sociable; too much and you'll have a hangover the next day, and may not even remember what you got up to; and way too much alcohol in a single session could put you in a coma or even kill you.

Although it is legal for people aged 18 and over to buy and drink alcohol, that doesn't mean it's safe.

Some effects include reduced feelings of anxiety and inhibitions, which can help you to feel more sociable. An exaggeration of whatever mood you are in when you start drinking.

Drinking a lot of alcohol (more than 6-8 units) will make you intoxicated (drunk), which will show itself as increasingly: slurred speech; lack of co-ordination and blurred vision.

Alcohol raises testosterone levels in males and females, which affects both sexual drive and aggression.

The more you drink in a sitting, the more your judgement will be affected, and this can lead to doing things or taking risks that you otherwise would not.

How long the effects last and the drug stays in your system depends on how much you have taken, your size and what other drugs you may have also taken.

Alcohol and the compounds are broken down into by your liver and are poisonous, and although they are eventually excreted from the system, they have a potentially damaging effect on almost every system of the body, which can result in health damage over time.

Resources:

Alcohol and its effects

Alcohol for Teens

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/alcohol.html>

Alcohol support

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support/>