

# Alcohol, Drugs and Accidents

Information for patients



## Some facts and figures

Excessive drinking is a factor in:

- almost two thirds of serious head injuries
- one third of accidents in the home
- a fifth of drownings
- half of all murders, woundings and assaults.

## Drinking and driving

1 in 3 drivers who are killed in road traffic accidents are over the legal alcohol limit. There are over 280 fatalities due to drink driving each year.

## Drink sensibly

Drinking sensibly will reduce the risk of damaging your health and being involved in accidents, as well as helping you to avoid problems with money, home and work.

The current government advice for safe sensible drinking limits is:

- Up to 21 units spread across the week for women (no more than 3 units per day).
- Up to 28 units spread across the week for men (no more than 4 units per day).

It is also recommended that you try to have at least two alcohol-free days per week.

## Examples of how many units are in different alcoholic drinks:

Half a pint of normal beer (4%)	1 unit
Single spirit shot (25ml) (40%)	1 unit
Small glass of wine (125ml) (12.5%)	1.5 units
Half a pint of strong beer (6.5%)	2 units
Large bottle/can strong beer (440ml) (6.5%)	3 units
Bottle of wine (750ml) (12.5%)	9 units
Bottle of spirits (750ml) (40%)	30 units

Drinking too much regularly, binge drinking or even drinking a little at the wrong time or in the wrong situation can be dangerous.

There is useful information about alcohol, as well as a unit calculator and drinking diary on the NHS Choices website:

**[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/alcohol-units.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/alcohol-units.aspx)**

It is our policy to advise all patients about the dangers of alcohol, and also to mention that illegal drugs are dangerous. These drugs are illegal because of the danger they pose to your health, both with regular long term use and occasional short term use. We would always advise against using illegal drugs, especially alongside alcohol.

Non-medicinal drugs and preparations such as 'legal highs' are also dangerous to your health, and have caused deaths. We strongly advise against the taking of these substances, especially with alcohol.

If you would like support to help you take control of your drinking or use of drugs, there are lots of support groups and services available. A good place to start is by talking to your GP.

There is also helpful advice on the NHS Choices website:

**[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/AlcoholSupport.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/AlcoholSupport.aspx)**

**[www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/DrugTreatment.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/DrugTreatment.aspx)**

## How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

**Emergency Department**      John Radcliffe Hospital  
Tel: **01865 220 224**

**Emergency Department**      Horton General Hospital  
Tel: **01295 229 412**

Alternatively you can contact your GP or NHS 111 (Freephone),  
for emergency advice.

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter,  
a document in Easy Read, another language, large print,  
Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473**  
or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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