

TIPS ON CUTTING DOWN

We're not saying don't drink at all, but here is some advice if you want to minimise the harmful effects of alcohol on you and your family.

- Aim to have at least two alcohol free days each week
- Try using smaller glasses
- Switch to lower percentage alcohol drinks, look at the Alcohol by Volume (ABV on the labels)
- Delay having your first drink, perhaps until after your children are in bed
- Be mindful of measurements – if you are drinking at home it is easy to pour yourself larger glasses than you would get if you were out at a pub or restaurant
- Use mixers to make spritzers - these will cut down the amount of alcohol you are consuming

The government advises that people should not regularly drink more than 14 units per week, and have at least 2 days alcohol free. Pregnant women should not drink any alcohol.

One unit of alcohol is roughly the same as 25ml of a spirit, a half pint of lager or a small glass of wine

Parts of this leaflet are adapted from the Alcohol Concern website <https://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/> and *Like Sugar for Adults* a report published by the Institute of Alcohol Studies

Forward Leeds supports adults and young people to make healthy choices about alcohol and drugs. We reduce risk-taking behaviours through dedicated prevention, early intervention and tailored programmes.

Remember changing your behaviour can have a positive impact on those around you as well.

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LIKE MY LIMIT...
LOVE MY FAMILY



Alcohol and Families



HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOU, YOUR PARTNER AND YOUR CHILDREN?

ALCOHOL AND RELATIONSHIPS

Alcohol works on the brain to lower our inhibitions which may make you feel more confident and less anxious. But those lower inhibitions can also make you accidentally say or do something that you may come to regret.

This can lead to arguments and aggressive moods that may start to appear after you've drunk too much. Scientists have linked aggression to the consumption of too much alcohol – so it's not surprising that you're more likely to argue after drinking.

There is a strong link between alcohol and domestic violence. Research typically finds that between 25% and 50% of those who perpetrate domestic abuse have been drinking at the time of assault, although in some studies the figure is as high as 73%.

ALCOHOL AND CHILDREN

Children affected by parental alcohol misuse are more likely to have physical, psychological and behavioural problems.

Evidence shows that parents do not have to regularly drink large amounts of alcohol for their children to experience negative impacts.

Having seen a parent tipsy or drunk was associated with children feeling worried as well as experiencing at least one of a range of negative impacts, including feeling embarrassed, less comforted than usual, facing more arguments, unpredictable parental behaviour and disrupted bedtime routines.

Because alcohol can remain in your system until the next day it is possible to still be over the limit when driving your children to school.

The more parents drink, starting from relatively low levels of drinking, the more likely children were to experience a range of harms.

Alcohol plays a part in 25 - 33% of child abuse cases.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARENTS

An alcohol free childhood is the best option. The chief medical officer advises that if a child should drink, it is not before 15 and should be supervised by an adult until 18.

- Parents develop clear and consistent rules around alcohol and have open discussions about why these rules are in place.
- Parents consider how much they drink around their children and avoid glamourising alcohol
- That parents are aware that being seen tipsy, hungover or drunk can have a negative impact upon their children.



THINKING ABOUT YOUR DRINKING

As well as considering the above, there are plenty of other good reasons to review your drinking.

- **Watch your weight** - Alcohol is heavy on calories. And with 682 calories in an average 13% bottle of wine, cutting down is a great way to stay in shape.
- **Sleep soundly** - Drinking less means that you get more high quality shuteye because alcohol interferes with the normal sleep process.
- **Reduce stress** - Some people drink to relax, but in fact excess alcohol can actually make you feel more stressed because it's a depressant.
- **Avoid hangovers** - Keep to the low risk alcohol unit guidelines and you can kiss goodbye to a sore head, dry mouth and that dreaded "what on earth was I thinking last night?" hangover feeling.
- **Stay healthy for longer** - Cutting down can be great news for your long-term health. Drinking less alcohol reduces the risks of alcohol-related cancers, diabetes and heart disease. It puts less pressure on the liver too.