

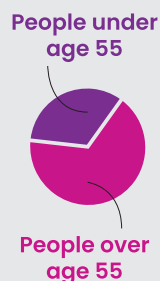
People in later life are more likely to be affected by alcohol-related issues than younger age groups. Here are some facts that may surprise you.

Age
 **55+**
= **14** units
or less per
week

**How Much
People Drink:**
Most people over 55
stick to 14 units of
alcohol or less per
week.

Impact on Healthcare:

The NHS spends more on alcohol-related treatments for 55 to 74-year-olds than for younger adults. In fact, two-thirds of alcohol-related hospital visits involve people over 55.



**Alcohol
consumed 5
days per week:**

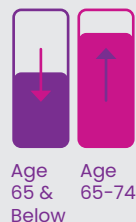
21% aged
65-74
3% aged
16-24

Drinking Habits:

About 21% of people aged 65-74 drink at least five days a week, compared to just 3% of 16-24 year olds.

Trends:

Drinking is going down in most age groups, except for those aged 65-74, where it's actually increasing.



You can find activities, services and support for older people across Leeds through Age UK:

Age UK Bradbury Building, Mark Lane,
LEEDS, LS2 8JA

info@ageukleeds.org.uk

0113 389 3000
www.ageuk.org.uk

Forward Leeds can help you change your relationship with alcohol. We can work with you to cut down on your drinking or to stop completely, it's up to you.

You can call **0113 887 2477**
9am - 5pm Monday – Friday
Visit our website:
www.forwardleeds.co.uk

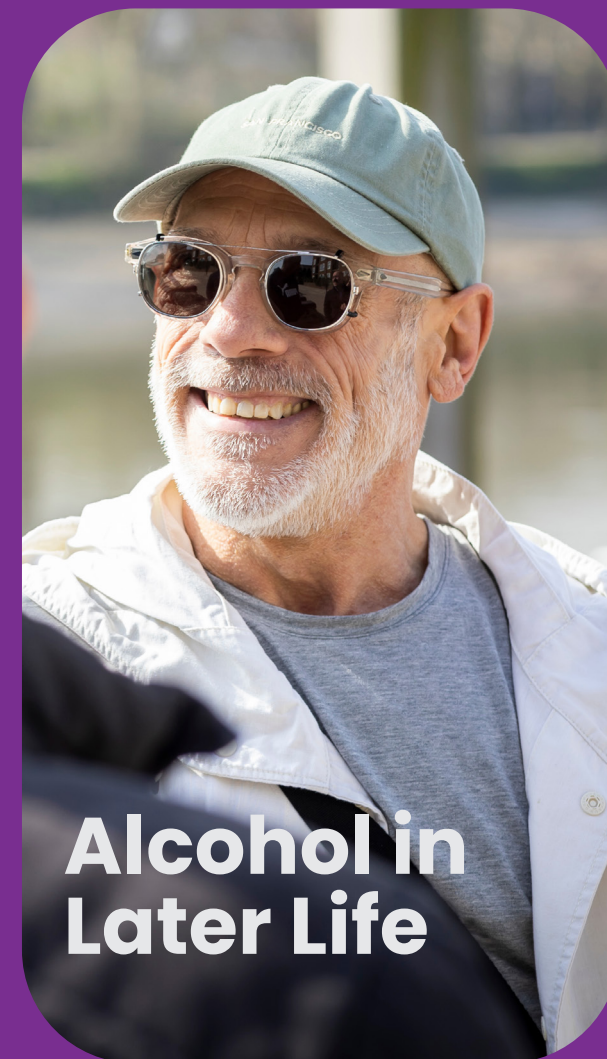
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Alcohol in Later Life

Staying Healthy and Safe

Making better choices about alcohol in later life can help with a healthier and more active lifestyle.

It can improve your overall well-being, mental clarity, and physical health and reduce the risk of illnesses. Increasing the amount of time we spend in good health in later life.

As we age, people can be more sensitive to the effects of alcohol. This is because as we get older our bodies change and break down alcohol more slowly.

After drinking the same amount of alcohol, people in later life have higher blood alcohol concentrations than younger people.

This means that a drink you'd have without consequence in your 30s or 40s has more effects in your 60s or 70s.



There are some things that can mean drinking alcohol is more dangerous in later life, including:

Health problems:

Having other health problems can make you more susceptible to the effects of alcohol. Alcohol can worsen existing conditions such as osteoporosis, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, ulcers, memory loss, and mood disorders.

Risk of falls:

As we age, our reaction times and balance may get worse. Alcohol can make you more unsteady, and so people in later life may be at additional risk of falls when they drink.

Medications:

There are some medications that are more commonly used in later life which can interact with alcohol and be dangerous. For example, if you drink alcohol and are taking medications to thin your blood, this can increase your risk of bleeding if you are injured. If you drink alcohol while taking certain antibiotics, this can make you feel very ill.

Forgetfulness:

Sometimes as people get more forgetful, or develop dementia, they forget how much alcohol they are drinking. If this happens to you, you might increase the amount that you are drinking without realising it.

Dependency:

People in later life may be at higher risk of alcohol dependency, sometimes as a coping mechanism for big life changes, such as bereavement or retirement.

Alcohol-related brain damage:

Long-term heavy drinking can lead to brain damage, affecting memory and thinking skills. Conditions such as Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome, sometimes called "alcohol-related dementia," can develop, causing severe confusion and memory loss. People in later life may be more vulnerable due to natural age-related brain changes, making even moderate drinking more harmful.

People can take steps to reduce the risks associated with alcohol and improve their overall health:

Limit your drinking: Follow the recommended guidelines of no more than 14 units of alcohol per week, spread over several days. Aim for alcohol-free days to let your body recover.

Find alternatives: Find social or stress-relief alternatives such as hobbies, exercise, or social groups to reduce reliance on alcohol for relaxation or coping. Switch to alcohol-free drinks in social settings.

Talk to someone: If you are worried about your drinking, or the factors causing you to drink, talk with family, friends, speak to your GP or contact Forward Leeds. Forward Leeds can support you in managing your drinking.