



# THE TRUTH ABOUT ALCOHOL



Alcohol is widely consumed by the people of Scotland including the residents of Greater Glasgow and Clyde area. When it is consumed within low risk guidelines it can be safely enjoyed. However, in recent years a number of factors including:

- larger glass sizes
- the increasing strength of alcoholic drinks
- the relatively low price of alcohol

have contributed to many people drinking more than is good for their health without realising it.

**Did you know...**  
20% of local drinkers had consumed twice the guideline amount on their heaviest drinking day in the last week (SHS).

**Did you know...**  
In Scotland, 35,500 hospital admissions annually are alcohol related (ISD).

**Did you know...**  
After a spell of heavy drinking, it is not advisable to drink for at least 24 hours to allow your body time to recover.

**Did you know...**  
26% of adults drink above low risk guidelines (SHS).

# GUIDE TO LOW RISK DRINKING



**Chief Medical Officer guidelines advise that:**

- To keep health risks from alcohol to a low level it is safest not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis.
- If you regularly drink as much as 14 units per week, it is best to spread your drinking evenly over 3 or more days.
- If you are pregnant or think you could become pregnant, the safest approach is not to drink alcohol at all, to keep risks to your baby to a minimum.

## But what's in a unit?

Units are a standard way of measuring how much alcohol is in any alcoholic drink. 40 years ago, this was quite straightforward as there wasn't as big a range of drinks on the market as there are today.

The 'How To Calculate Units' table tells you how many units are in common drinks.

# BENEFITS OF REDUCING YOUR ALCOHOL INTAKE

**LESS IS BETTER.** There are a number of benefits to reducing how much alcohol you drink. Some of these are short term benefits and will make a difference almost immediately while others will take a bit of time to kick in.

If you drink less alcohol, the benefits might include:

- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>LESS</b> chance of     | <b>MORE</b> chance of        |
| • accidental injury       | • enjoying your night out    |
| • being assaulted         | • getting home safely        |
| • unsafe or unplanned sex | • having a good nights sleep |

The next day you might notice there is:

- |                                      |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>LESS</b> chance of                | <b>MORE</b> chance of          |
| • being hungover                     | • having more energy           |
| • driving while still over the limit | • remembering the night before |
| • making mistakes at work            | • having money left over       |
| • having to call in sick             |                                |

The longer term health and social benefits of drinking less alcohol include:

- reduced risk of cancer, high blood pressure, having a stroke, liver or heart disease or stomach problems
- improved relationships
- better mental health
- better physical health
- coping better with everyday life

# UNIT CALCULATOR

If your favourite drink isn't listed here, use the formula below to work out how many units are in it. You need to know the size of the measure in millilitres and the strength as a percentage.

**Strength (%) multiplied by volume (ml) divided by 1000.**  
For example, a 175ml glass of wine at 11% would be:  
**11 x 175 = 1925 / 1000 = 1.92 units**

 <b>1</b>	25ml pub measure (gin, vodka, whisky)
 <b>2.3</b>	175ml 13% strength red or white wine
 <b>3.25</b>	250ml 13% strength red or white wine
 <b>1</b>	125ml glass prosecco 8%
 <b>1.7</b>	330ml bottle 5% strength beer or lager
 <b>2.8</b>	pint 5% strength beer or lager
 <b>26</b>	37.5% strength 700ml bottle vodka/gin/rum
 <b>28</b>	40% strength 700ml bottle whisky/bourbon/brandy
 <b>4</b>	440ml can super strength beer or lager
 <b>2.8</b>	pint 5% strength cider
 <b>4.8</b>	pint 8.5% strength cider
 <b>11.25</b>	750ml bottle tonic wine
 <b>3</b>	average cocktail, 40%