



ALCOHOL

Bromley

Well

HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated December 2025

What is harmful drinking?

Harmful drinking is defined as a pattern of alcohol consumption causing health problems directly related to alcohol. This includes psychological problems such as depression, alcohol-related accidents or conditions such as acute pancreatitis.



What are the risks of heavy drinking?

Long term heavy drinking can increase your risk of developing:

- High blood pressure – a major risk factor of having a stroke or heart attack
- Heart disease
- Liver disease
- Liver cancer and bowel cancer
- Mouth cancer
- Cirrhosis of liver (where damage to the liver causes scar tissues to build up which can lead to cancer)

ALCOHOL UNITS



1 UNIT

½ pint beer, lager, cider
ABV 3.6%

125ml glass of wine

25ml measure of spirits

100ml glass of prosecco

ALCOHOL GUIDELINES

Men and women should not regularly drink more than 14 units a week.

If you drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week, it's best to spread this evenly over three days or more.

Pregnant women should not drink alcohol.

Have one or two alcohol free days each week.

If you have drunk too much, allow 48 hours for your body to recover.

To register with Bromley Well:
Freephone 0808 278 7898
Or register online:
www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer

Contact Lifestyle Support direct
07985 431484 / 07985 444210
or email
enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk



Other effects of alcohol

Alcohol has high sugar content

Drinking excessive amounts over time can decrease the effectiveness of insulin, leading to high blood sugar levels and diabetes.

Alcohol is a diuretic

Alcohol acts on the kidneys to make you lose more fluids from your body, leading to dehydration which can cause headaches.

Alcohol poisoning

This can lead to vomiting, seizures (fits) and falling unconscious.

What about treatment?

- Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) has been shown to be helpful.
- Medication (such as acamprosate, disulfiram, naltrexone, and nalmefene) can be prescribed to treat alcohol misuse.
- Keeping a drinking diary to record how many units of alcohol you drink a week may help control your alcohol intake.



DID YOU KNOW?

Alcohol is very high in calories and excessive consumption can lead to weight gain.

Alcohol can affect your sleep patterns and it is best to avoid drinking alcohol before bedtime.

Alcohol weakens the heart muscle, which can mean the heart does not pump blood efficiently. This can cause premature death, usually through heart failure.

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Some myths about alcohol

Myth 1: A glass of red wine is good for you

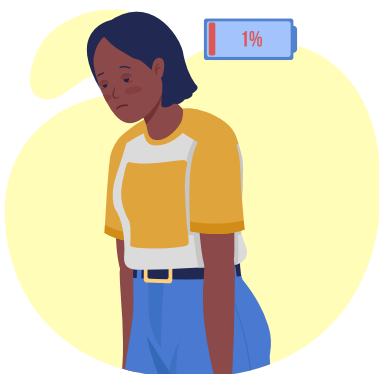
Untrue! Unfortunately, the negative affects of alcohol, such as damage to organs and mental health, outweigh any benefits there may be to our health from the antioxidants in red wine.

Myth 2: Drinking heavily on just the weekend is ok!

This is not true. Any kind of binge drinking is harmful to our organs and our health. Try to stay under the recommended weekly limit of 14 units, and spread your units across the week to avoid binge drinking.

Myth 3: Alcohol helps you sleep better

Incorrect! Alcohol often helps us falls asleep quicker which is what has led to this myth. However, it also disrupts our sleep and causes us to wake up feeling groggy and dehydrated.



TRY THIS

If you are looking to reduce your alcohol consumption, it can be hard to know where to start. Here are some tips to help:

FACTOR IN NON-DRINKING DAYS TO YOUR WEEK

A good way to start reducing your alcohol intake is by taking breaks each week. This is a smaller goal that still gives your body a break from some of the negative affects of alcohol.

TELL FRIENDS AND FAMILY THAT YOU ARE CUTTING DOWN

Not having the pressure to drink can really help you work out when you can go without it.

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FURTHER RESOURCES

Drinkaware

www.drinkaware.co.uk

Drinkline 0300 123 1110

National charity providing advice, information and tools to help you make better choices about your drinking.

Alcohol Change UK

alcoholchange.org.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous

0800 9177 650

National charity providing information, advice and support to help you make better choices about your drinking.

Drink Wise Age Well

www.drinkwiseagewell.org.uk

Website with online workshops to support lifestyle changes around alcohol.

Drugs and Alcohol Service

Weekday 020 8289 1999

Weekends 07738 802 713

A Drug and Alcohol Service in Bromley that offers support in crisis, as well as ongoing support in person and on the phone.

[NHS live well alcohol support](#)

NHS advice on drinking, including a tracking app and links to services.

NHS Better Health & Drink Less App

www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/

Link to download NHS drink less app.

References: NHS choices: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/>
Public Health England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-combating-high-blood-pressure/health-matters-combating-high-blood-pressure>

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