



ALCOHOL

Bromley

Well

HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated July 2024

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)

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

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

Alcohol poisoning

May 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

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>

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

DO YOU KNOW THAT?

- Alcohol is very high in calories and excessive consumption can lead to weight gain
- Alcohol can affect your sleep patterns and it 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

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



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FURTHER RESOURCES

<p><u>Drinkaware</u></p> <p>Drinkline 0300 123 1110</p>	<p>National charity providing advice, information and tools to help you make better choices about your drinking.</p>
<p><u>Alcohol Change UK</u></p> <p>Alcoholics Anonymous 0800 9177 650</p>	<p>National charity providing information, advice and support to help you make better choices about your drinking.</p>
<p>Drink Wise Age Well https://www.drinkwiseagewell.org.uk/about/</p>	<p>Website with online workshops to support lifestyle changes around alcohol.</p>
<p><u>Drugs and Alcohol Service in Bromley</u></p> <p>Weekday 020 8289 1999 Weekends 07738 802 713</p>	<p>Drug and Alcohol Service that offers support in crisis but also ongoing support in person and on the phone.</p>
<p><u>NHS live well alcohol support</u></p>	<p>NHS advice on drinking, including a tracking app and links to services.</p>
<p><u>NHS Better Health & Drink Less App</u></p>	<p>Link to download NHS drink less app.</p>

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