

Age Well Drink Wiser



Your guide to
making healthier
choices about alcohol.



HELP AND ADVICE

As we age our bodies change. This means we may be at increased of harm from alcohol even when drinking within recommended limits, especially if we have any health conditions or are on medications. Why not have a read through this guide, do the quiz and see how you score.

Benefits of making healthier choices about your alcohol use:

Improve your health, relationships and energy.



You are less likely to have an accident or fall.



Improved memory and sharper mind.



Medication may work better and be more effective.



You can reignite old interests or find new hobbies.



By cutting down on the amount you drink you can save money.



A more refreshing sleep and more energy as a result.



You may stay healthy and independent for longer.



STEP ONE: KEEP TRACK

Most people now drink at home more than anywhere else - more so as we age. At home it's easier to be overgenerous with measures and harder to keep track of how much you've drunk. Learning more about how much you're drinking or using a unit measure is a simple way to keep track and can help you keep an eye out for some of the problems even day-to-day drinking can cause.

Regularly drinking alcohol can:

Cause
memory
problems.



Mean
a poor
night's sleep.



Make you
depressed
or anxious.



Put you
over the
drink driving limit.



And as we age, alcohol affects us differently and can start causing us problems. It can:

Interact
negatively
with medications.



Increase
blood
pressure.



Increase
the risk of
injury or falls.



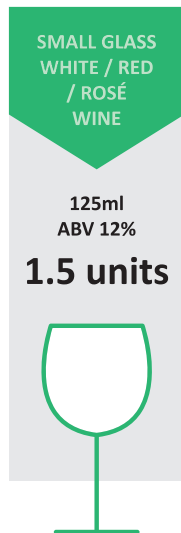
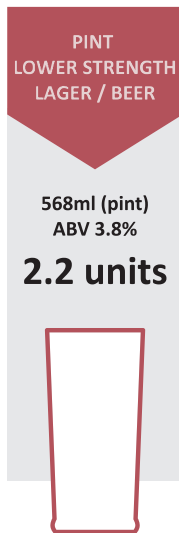
Make health
problems
worse i.e. Diabetes.



WHAT IS A UNIT OF ALCOHOL?

Using units to keep track of your drinking is easier than it seems. Look on bottles and cans for the number of units in a drink or you can calculate your own with the formula below.

Here are some examples



Formula

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{strength (ABV)} \\ \times \\ \text{volume (ml)} \\ \div \\ 1000 \\ = \text{units} \end{array}$$

Men & women are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week.

STEP TWO: FIND OUT HOW YOU SCORE

Below is a short quiz on your alcohol use.

Let's start by answering the following questions to see how you score.

	Scoring System					Your Score
	0	1	2	3	4	
How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never	Monthly or less	2-4 times per month	2-3 times per week	4+ times per week	
How many units of alcohol do you drink on a typical day when you are drinking?	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-9	10+	
How often have you had 6 or more units if female, or 8 or more if male, on a single occasion in the last year?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily	
Audit C - World Health Organisation						TOTAL

HOW DID YOU SCORE?

Find out how you scored below and see if you could do more to reduce your risk. The recommended lower risk guidelines are below to help you, or you may want to contact us for help and advice.

0 – 4

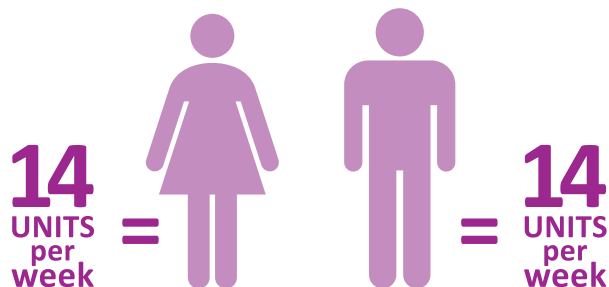
WELL DONE

You are a lower risk drinker and less likely to experience problems caused by alcohol

5 – 12

MIND YOURSELF

You may be drinking at a level that can cause problems for you now or in the future we would recommend speaking to your GP



If you do drink as much as 14 units per week, try to spread this evenly over 3 days or more

If you wish to cut down the amount you're drinking, a good way to help achieve this is to have several drink-free days each week

STEP THREE: MAKE SIMPLE CHANGES

6 TIPS TO MAKE HEALTHIER CHOICES ABOUT ALCOHOL

LOWER YOUR RISK

Stay within the recommended guidelines of 14 units per week and spread these out over a few days.

KEEP TRACK

Our drinks diary can help you keep track of how much you're drinking.
Why not track your drinks for a few weeks, if you want any advice speak to your GP or local alcohol service

KEEP ACTIVE

Getting older has its positives, such as time to do things we enjoy. We run lots of social activities and events in your area.

GIVE YOUR BODY A BREAK

Have at least 2-3 alcohol free days each week.

EAT SOMETHING

Have a meal when you are drinking or eat something beforehand.

KEEP HYDRATED

Have a non-alcoholic drink or water with or after each alcoholic drink. Sometimes we don't feel the effects right away and drink a little too quickly.

DRINKS DIARY:

It is important to have a look at your alcohol use over a period of time to see whether you can identify any negative patterns to your drinking. Over the next few pages we have included some drinks diaries that can help you track your drinking.

Useful tips when using the diary

Day- by tracking which days you tend to drink, you'll be able to determine whether there are any significant days of the week where you always drink. For example after work on a Friday. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it is helpful to identify your reasons for drinking.

Time of day – this is a good indicator of your relationship with alcohol and may help to identify your reasons for drinking.

Social or solo – the details of how you drink will help you identify whether there are any underlying reasons for your alcohol use. For example, do you regularly drink on your own or find going to the pub is the only way you socialise.

What did I drink? – it is important to consider the type and strength of the alcohol you drink as you may be able to make small changes, such as swapping to a weaker strength lager.

Units – measuring your units will allow you to have a realistic idea of the amount you drink as the size of glass and measure may vary. Your unit intake will let you see whether you are drinking over the guidelines.

Reason for drinking – this is about being clear with yourself about why you are drinking.

DRINKS DIARY:

[illegible]

DRINKS DIARY:

[illegible]

SETTING GOALS:

Look at your diary, are there any patterns you can see or changes you would like to make? There might be situations in which you drink more than you intended or times when you drink more often than you wanted. It can be useful to look at what triggers this; colleagues inviting you out after work or feeling you have had a bad day perhaps? Setting goals can help you make changes.

The simple planning tool below might be a good place to start. If you would like any additional tools or want to discuss your goals then speak to your GP or call the your local alcohol service (see number on back page).

Identify the pattern you want to change:

Reason for change?

Set yourself actions to achieve change:

What?

Where?

When?



For FREE information and services in Doncaster that will help you rethink your drink, visit the websites or call our confidential service numbers below.

For tips and information to help reduce your drinking visit: **www.rethinkyourdrinkdoncaster.co.uk**



For a confidential chat with someone about your drinking call Aspire on: **03000 213900**.

Or visit: **www.aspire.community**



To find out what services are available in Doncaster or to have an informal chat about your drinking call Project6 on: **01302 360090**.

Or visit: **<https://project6.org.uk/doncaster/>**