Over 50?

Enjoy a Drink?

Here’s the way to enjoy your favourite drink...

Safely!
Do you like a drink?

Well, most of us do - the great majority of British adults enjoy a drink.

But isn’t alcohol good for you?

Low levels of alcohol consumption, such as one small glass of wine, can protect some people from heart disease.

In moderation alcohol consumption can contribute to quality of life, particularly if the drinking takes place as a social activity with other people.

Enjoy a drink BUT don’t over indulge. Moderation is the key!
BUT alcohol does carry some special risks for the over 50 age-group

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF DRINKING TOO MUCH?

- As you get older alcohol stays in the blood stream for longer and the liver becomes more easily damaged
- Increased chances of falls and accidents in the home
- Incontinence
- Affects the memory
- There is increased risk of coronary heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke
- Alcohol can be addictive
- Driving over the legal limit
- Insomnia
- Drinking is expensive and can lead to financial difficulties
- Self-neglect - you can start to lose social contact and not take care of yourself properly
- Tendency not to eat if you’re drinking too much
- Hypothermia
- Doesn’t mix with medication
- Drinking can make you feel depressed
- Increased chances of being a victim of a crime
Why do people drink too much?

There are many reasons why people may drink too much, such as:

• Bereavement - death of partner, family members or friends
• Mental Stress
• Physical ill health
• Loneliness and isolation
• Loss - family moved away, loss of skills, loss of income
• Ease pain and physical discomfort
• It has become a habit

What can I do to reduce the risks and still have a drink?

• Change your daily routine to avoid drinking situations
• Get involved in activities which don't include alcohol, e.g. exercise, volunteering or evening class
• Try having a warm drink rather than an alcoholic one to help you sleep
• Take up a new hobby or interest
What can I do?

If you think you, or a close friend, is drinking too much:

- Add up the number of drinks/units you’ve had in the last week, and if it's more than 21 for a man, 14 for a woman, then try and cut it down gradually.
- If this doesn’t work, then arrange to see your G.P.
- Reduce the amount of alcohol you drink by choosing drinks that are not so strong
- Set aside specific days in the week where you do not drink
- Drink some water between each alcoholic drink

Where can I get help?

- G.P.
- Practice Nurse
- District Nurse
- Health Visitor
- Alcoholics Anonymous: 0845 769 7555
- Age Concern: 020 8765 7200
- Drinkline: 0800 917 8282
- Samaritans: 08457 909090
**Your guide to units**

**MEN** - No more than 3-4 units per day but not every day and no more than 21 units per week.

**WOMEN** - No more than 2-3 units per day, but not every day and no more than 14 units per week.

**What's a unit?**

**SPIRITS**

A pub measure is 35 mls and is 1.5 units.
A double measure is equal to 3 units.

**WINE**

A bottle of 12% abv (alcohol by volume) wine has 9 units, so sharing a bottle between 2 means consuming 4.5 units.

Fortified wine, such as sherry and port, a pub measure is 75 mls and is 1.5 units.

A small glass of wine is equal to 2 units.
A large glass of wine, 3 units.

**BEER**

Half a pint (250mls) beer has 1 unit

The alcoholic content of the drink may mean you are consuming more units than you realise, also home measures can be larger.