What you should do in an emergency

**Dial 999**

**DO**
- CALL AN AMBULANCE
- SEE THAT THE PERSON’S MOUTH IS CLEAR AND THAT THEY CAN BREATHE
- TURN THEM ONTO THEIR SIDE (THE RECOVERY POSITION)
- KEEP THEM WARM
- WATCH THEM

**DON’T**
- LEAVE THEM ALONE
- GIVE THEM BLACK COFFEE – OR ANYTHING ELSE
- TRY TO WALK THEM ABOUT

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**USEFUL CONTACTS**

**AL-ANON**
A community resource.
Confidential hotline:
020 7403 0888

**ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND**
2nd floor, 166 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2JU
Tel: 0841 573 6700
www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS (HEAD OFFICE)**
P.O. Box 1, Stonebow House, Stonebow, York
YO1 7NJ
Tel: 01904 644 026
National Helpline:
0845 769 9555
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

**ALCOHOL CONCERN**
Waterbridge House, 32-36
Loman Street,
London SE1 0EE
Tel: 020 7908 7377
www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

**NORTHERN IRELAND COMMUNITY ADDICTION SERVICE**
40 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast
BT9 6AZ
Tel: 02890 664 434

**PARENTLINE PLUS**
530 Highgate Studios, 53-79
Highgate Road, London
N6 1TL
Tel: 020 7284 5263 (admin)
Tel: 0808 800 2222
(free helpline number)
www.parentlineplus.org.uk

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**NHS HEALTH SCOTLAND**
Woodburn House, Canaan Lane, Edinburgh EH10 4SG
Tel: 0131 536 5500
www.healthscotland.com

**HEALTH CHALLENGE WALES**
(HER LECHYD CYMRU)
Public Strategy Division,
Crown Building, Cathays Park,
Cardiff CF10 3NP
Tel: 02920 825111
www.cmwa.wales.gov.uk

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**ALCOHOL POISONING**

**HOW TO AVOID IT**

**HOW TO DEAL WITH IT**

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**DRINK AWARE**
Open daily Monday to Friday
9am-11pm, Saturday and
Sunday 6pm-11pm. Calls are
free and confidential.
Tel: 0800 917 8582

info@drinkaware.co.uk | www.drinkaware.co.uk

Written by Dr David Moore
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CAN ALCOHOL EVER BE A POISON?

Alcoholic drinks, when enjoyed sensibly and in moderation, can be a source of pleasure for many. But many things taken to excess can be poisonous enough to kill.

Alcohol is one. The fact is that if a person drinks large amounts of alcohol on one occasion, there is a risk of serious injury or even death. Unfortunately there are people who make this mistake every year – too many tragedies occur in consequence. But how much is too much?

IT DEPENDS ON THE PERSON'S SIZE, WEIGHT, SEX, GENETIC MAKE-UP AND OTHER FACTORS.

However, it is clear that if an average male drank a bottle of spirits or equivalent at one time, it would be enough to kill him. If you are small or female – or both – you may die or come close to death on half that amount.

To find out more about the effects of alcohol and to find out how many units you can drink safely, log on to drinkaware.co.uk

HOW CAN ALCOHOL KILL?

Alcohol drunk in excess at one time affects the body in two ways that can be dangerous: it depresses the brain and it irritates the stomach.


Add the second effect, the stomach irritation, and there is another danger. To vomit when the brain is malfunctioning means that choking to death is a real risk. Even worse, vomiting in this condition can trigger an instant nerve reflex that stops the heart – dead. If the two effects work together, a person could die from choking after a much smaller dose than is needed for direct poisoning.

WHAT DOES A PERSON WITH ALCOHOL POISONING LOOK LIKE?

The person will be collapsed. They will be difficult or impossible to rouse. The body will be winding down so the skin is cool and clammy. The breathing is slow and noisy. The pupils of the eyes may be wide. There may have been some vomiting. They may have wet themselves – or worse.

HOW CAN I AVOID ALCOHOL POISONING?

DO

- Drink moderately
- Drink slowly
- Space your drinks with water or soft drinks
- Eat with your drinks

DON'T

- Drink too much
- Drink too much of anything with which you are not familiar
- Drink drinks you have not seen mixed
- Drink for a bet or a competition
- Let drinking in round or 'shouts' push you into drinking more than you want