SAY WHEN...

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?
CONTENTS

Introduction 3
How much do I drink? 5
How often do I drink? 7
Drinks diary 8
How much is too much? 10
Daily benchmark guide 11
What kind of drinker am I? 12
How will I gain from drinking less? 18
How can I cut down? 20
Ten tips for cutting down 22
Some advice for family, friends & colleagues 26
Helping someone to help themselves 27
Where to find further help 30

INTRODUCTION

Most people drink alcohol, and most do so without any problems. We all know that a drink can sometimes help us to unwind or to relax with friends.

Drinking in moderation is unlikely to lead to problems. But heavy drinking, getting drunk, or drinking at the wrong time or in the wrong place, can lead to a whole range of difficulties.

Drink affects everyone in different ways and can lead to different sorts of problems. And it’s not just the drinker who is affected. One person’s heavy drinking often causes difficulties for all those people they come into contact with— their family, their friends and their colleagues.

How would you describe your drinking? Most people say that they drink ‘a little’ or ‘a moderate amount’. Yet one in three men and one in five women drink more than the recommended daily benchmarks at least once a week. The next section explains how you can work out how much you drink. It’s worth finding out.
‘HOW MUCH DO I DRINK?’

If you want to work out how much you drink, you need to ask yourself three questions:

- how much do I usually drink on a weekday?
- how much do I usually drink on a Friday night, Saturday and Sunday?
- how much do I drink on a special occasion, like having friends over, someone’s birthday or a wedding?

You may find it helps to fill out the drinks diary on pages 8 and 9. Don’t forget to include any drinks you have with a meal, and ‘extras’ like a can or two when you’re watching sport on the telly, or a glass of wine while you’re cooking, or a tot of something in a hot drink. It all adds up.

Having recorded how much you’re drinking, you need to work out how much pure alcohol (ethanol) you’re consuming.
Different types of drink have different amounts of alcohol in them. One way of working out the total amount of alcohol you're drinking is by using 'units' of alcohol as a measure. A unit is equivalent to 8 grams or 10ml (1cl) of pure alcohol.

As a rough guide, there's ONE unit of alcohol in:

- half a pint of standard strength beer, lager or cider (3.5 or 4% abv - alcohol by volume)
- a small glass (125ml) of lower strength wine (8 or 9% abv)
- a single 25ml pub measure of spirits (40% abv)

But many other drinks contain approximately TWO units of alcohol, for example:

- a pint or a large can (500ml) of standard strength beer, lager or cider (3.5 or 4% abv)
- half a pint or half a large can of high strength beer or lager (8 or 9% abv)
- a large (50ml) whisky or other spirit
- a large glass (175ml) of wine that is 11% or 12% abv
- a 330ml bottle of lager or 'alcopop' (5.5% abv)

'HOW OFTEN DO I DRINK?'

Having worked out how much you usually drink and how much you drink on special occasions, you need to ask yourself how often you drink. Every day? Most days? Weekends only? Less often?

You may find that you drink more in some situations than you do in others. Perhaps because of who you're with, or how you're feeling. Again, you might find it interesting to fill out the drinks diary on the next two pages.

| Day | Time | Drink | Location | Notes | Days Post-Event | Notes | Day in Diary | Tired/Sick | Stressed | School/Work
|-----|------|-------|----------|-------|----------------|-------|-------------|------------|----------|----------
| Wed | 5-1  | Bag & Drink | Home | leisure | 2 pints | full after work | home, still tired | 12:00 | still stressed??
| Thu | 9-2  | Italian restaurant | Home | leisure | 1/2 bottle | home, it was a big deal | home, can't concentrate in afternoon | 12:00 | home, can't concentrate in afternoon | hard to
| Fri | 6-11 | Bag & Drink | Work | work | 6 pints | still tired | was at my best | 12:00 | still tired | home, can't
| Sat | 2-5  | Home in front of the King's Head | Work | leisure | 3 pints | still tired | was at my best | 12:00 | still tired | home, can't
| Sun | 2-72 | Didn't Drink | Home | leisure | 3 pints | still tired | was at my best | 12:00 | still tired | home, can't
| Mon | 9-6  | Didn't Drink | Home | leisure | 3 pints | still tired | was at my best | 12:00 | still tired | home, can't

Now compare your drinking with the benchmarks and patterns of drinking described on pages 10 to 17.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
<th>WHO WITH</th>
<th>WHAT YOU DRANK</th>
<th>NO. OF DRINKS</th>
<th>HOW YOU FELT BEFORE DRINKING</th>
<th>HOW YOU FELT AFTER DRINKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See page 6 to help you turn your drinks into units. Please copy these pages to make your own drinks diary.