

Long Term Effects of Alcohol

In the long term, alcohol can contribute to a variety of problems, including damage to an unborn child, liver disease, osteoporosis (thinning of the bones), pancreatitis, stomach ulcers, infertility, heart disease, raised blood pressure, stroke, dementia and brain damage.

It can also lead to an increased risk of a variety of cancers, particularly mouth and breast cancer and cancer of the gullet. It is also frequently associated with mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety.

Smoking and drinking alcohol are the main causal factors of oral cancer. When both products are used the risks are multiplied rather than added. People who smoke two or more packets of cigarettes and drink four or more units of alcohol a day have a 35 times increased risk of developing oral cancer compared with those who neither smoke nor drink more than two units of alcohol a day.

Even if you don't drink all week, you cannot 'save up' your units and then drink them all in one night. Drinking more than the recommended daily limit is potentially dangerous. Drinking more than twice your daily limit (six units for women and 8 units for men) on any one drinking occasion qualifies as a 'binge'.

Try to have at least one soft drink for every two alcoholic drinks you have on a night out.

We ask all adult patients about alcohol intake as it is an important risk factor in oral cancer. At every Oral Health Assessment we screen all patients for oral cancer.

More information

Redbridge Open Access Alcohol Service

3rd Floor, Ilford Chambers
11 Chapel Road
Ilford, IG1 2DR

Tel No: 020 8553 4941
www.wdp-drugs.org.uk

Useful websites

www.drinkaware.co.uk
www.downyourdrink.org.uk

Confidential helpline

Drinkline: 0800 917 8282
For yourself or advice about others