

## Alcohol and Oral Health

### The recommended limits of alcohol drinking are:

Up to 2 – 3 units daily for women

Up to 3 – 4 units daily for men

At least 2 days free from alcohol a week, for men and women

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

Spread your drinking over three days or more if you drink as much as 14 units a week.

### The short term health risks of alcohol include:



- Anxiety
- Sexual difficulties such as impotence
- Impaired judgement leading to accidents and injuries
- Slowed breathing and heartbeat
- Loss of consciousness
- Suffocation through choking on your own vomit (aspiration)
- Potentially fatal poisoning

### List of Units and Calories in Drinks

Alcopops (4%) – One 275ml bottle e.g. WKD, Smirnoff Ice, Bacardi Breezer	1.1 units	174 kcal
Beer (5%) – One pint e.g. Stella Artois, Kronenbourg, Carlsberg Export	2.8 units	242 kcal
Beer (4%) – One pint e.g. Carling, John Smiths, Guinness	2.3 units	193 kcal
Beer (5%) – One bottle (330ml) e.g. Grolsch, Budweiser	1.7 units	138 kcal
Champagne (12%) One small glass (125ml)	1.5 units	95 kcal
Cider (4.5%) – One pint e.g. Magners, Strongbow	2.6 units	207 kcal
Cider (7.5%) – 500ml can e.g. Frosty Jack's, Diamond White	3.8 units	230 kcal
Clear Spirits (37.5%) – 35ml serving e.g. Gordon's, Smirnoff, Bacardi	1.3 units	73 kcal
Cream Liqueur (17%) – 50ml glass e.g. Baileys	0.9 units	175 kcal
Dark Spirits (40%) – 35ml serving e.g. Bell's Martell, Captain Morgan	1.4 units	85 kcal
Wine (13%) – Standard glass (175ml)	2.3 units	134 kcal
Wine (13%) – Large glass (250ml)	3.3 units	191 kcal
Wine (13%) – One bottle (750ml)	9.8 units	573 kcal

## 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](http://www.wdp-drugs.org.uk)

### Useful websites

[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)  
[www.downyourdrink.org.uk](http://www.downyourdrink.org.uk)

### Confidential helpline

Drinkline: 0800 917 8282  
For yourself or advice about others