

What is Excess Alcohol Consumption?

UNDERSTANDING WHAT A UNIT IS¹

- In the UK, 1 unit is measured as 10ml or 8g of pure alcohol

This equals:

- One pub measure (25ml) of whisky, alcohol by volume: (ABV 40%)
- Half a pint of ordinary strength beer, lager or cider (3-4% ABV)
- Half a standard (175ml) glass of red wine (ABV 12%)



$$\frac{\text{Strength (ABV)} \times \text{Volume (ml)}}{1000} = \text{No. of units}$$

UK RECOMMENDED LIMITS¹

WOMEN



2–3 units or 16–24g alcohol per day

MEN



3–4 units or 24–32g alcohol per day

Men should:

- drink no more than 21 units of alcohol per week
- drink no more than four units in any one day
- have at least two alcohol-free days a week

Women should:

- drink no more than 14 units of alcohol per week
- drink no more than three units in any one day
- have at least two alcohol-free days a week

¹ NHS Choices Website. www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/alcohol-units.aspx. Last accessed: March 2015.

Excess Alcohol Consumption Comes with Negative Consequences

A wide range of physical and mental health problems, as well as social problems, are linked to drinking excessively.

Drinking more than you should can seriously impair your health.

Excessive alcohol consumption can harm many different parts and systems of the body¹⁻³

Brain

Headaches, delusions, paranoia, decline in IQ, dementia, epileptic fits, haemorrhage, peripheral neuritis, death

Throat & gullet

Increased risk of cancer

Heart

Weak & "fatty" heart, weakened heart muscles, hypertension, anaemia

Liver

Fatty cells, scarring, jaundice, hepatitis, cirrhosis

Stomach

Gastritis, peptic ulcer

Pancreas

Poor digestion, malnutrition, diabetes

Intestines

Inflammation

Sexual organs

Men: Depressed testicular production, impotence

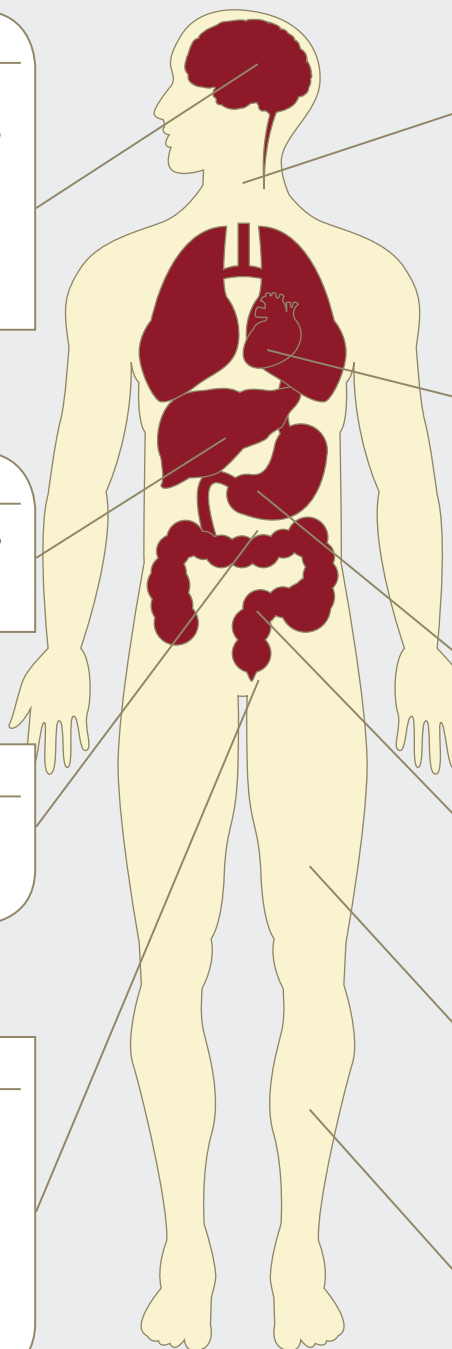
Women: Failure to ovulate, miscarriage

Nervous system

Malfunctions, tremors

Bones & muscles

Degeneration, weakness, pain



1. WHO Europe 2012. Alcohol in the European Union. Consumption, harm and policy approaches. Edited by: Peter Anderson, Lars Møller and Gauden Galea.
 2. Babor TF et al; AUDIT: The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test, Guidelines for Use in Primary Care, 2nd edition, WHO, 2001.
 3. Adapted from A-team alcohol services, England. Available at: http://www.alcohol-services-ateam.org.uk/effects_of_alcohol.html. Last accessed: March 2015.