



ScreenSafeUK

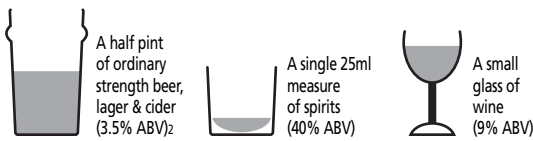
Alcohol and its Effects

What happens when you drink alcohol?

- Alcohol is absorbed into your bloodstream within a few minutes of being drunk and carried to all parts of your body including the brain.

- The concentration of alcohol in the body, known as the 'blood alcohol concentration', depends on many factors, but principally, how much you have drunk, how long you have been drinking, whether you have eaten, and your size and weight. It is difficult to know exactly how much alcohol is in your bloodstream or what effect it may have.

- It takes a healthy liver about 1 hour to break down and remove 1 unit of alcohol. A unit is equivalent to 8 gm or 10ml (1 cl) of pure alcohol. The following all contain one unit of alcohol:



- If someone drinks 2 pints of ordinary strength beer at lunchtime or half a bottle of wine (i.e. 4 units), they will still have alcohol in their bloodstream 3 hours later. Similarly, if someone drinks heavily in the evening they may still be over the legal drink drive limit the following morning.
- Black coffee, cold showers and fresh air will not sober someone up. Only time can remove alcohol from the bloodstream.

(1) Don't Mix it – a guide for employers on alcohol at work produced by HSE Books IND(G) 240L (rev11/96).

(2) ABV: Alcohol By Volume.



Alcohol and Pregnancy

Women trying to become pregnant or who are at any stage of pregnancy should be advised to set a limit of one or two units a week e.g. one or two small glasses of wine, and avoid getting drunk. Drinking too much alcohol may make it harder for a woman to become pregnant, as well as directly affecting the developing baby in the womb. Even after the baby is born, alcohol can be passed to the baby in small amounts through breast milk and this may affect the baby's feeding habits, bowel movements and sleeping patterns.

Daily Benchmarks

The following benchmarks are a guide to how much adult men and women can drink in a day without putting their health at risk. They apply whether you drink every day, once or twice a week, or occasionally. The benchmarks are not targets to drink up to. There are times and circumstances when it makes sense not to drink at all.

Men

If you drink between 3 and 4 units a day or less, there are no significant risks to your health, BUT...If you consistently drink 4 or more units a day, there is an increasing risk to your health.

Women

If you drink between 2 and 3 units a day or less, there are no significant risks to your health, BUT...If you consistently drink 3 or more units a day, there is an increasing risk to your health.

Note: the benchmarks don't apply to young people who have not yet reached physical maturity.

www.screensafeuk.co.uk

For friendly, professional and confidential advice, please contact



Testing Standards in the Workplace

Tel / Fax: 08450 505590
Email: enquiries@screensafeuk.co.uk