

a pocket safety guide
alcohol



GOOD HEALTH
OUR CHOICE

● Community Counselling and Advisory Service, (North Cork catchment area) 10 Church Street, Cork	021 4212382	● Youth Health Service, (Drugs and Alcohol Counselling Service) 73 Shandon Street, Cork	021 4220490
● Community Counselling and Advisory Service, (West Cork catchment area) Skibbereen	028 23456	● Anchor Treatment Centre, Spa Glen, Mallow, Co Cork	022 4300844
● Arbour House, (South Lee catchment area) Addiction Treatment Centre, Douglas Road, Cork	021 4968933	● Matt Talbot Adolescent Services, Trabeg Lawn, South Douglas Road, Cork	021 4896400
● Liaison Mental Health Service, (service attached to CUH) Liaison Mental Health Nurse	021 4546400	● Nar-Anon, (Support group for the family and friends of those with a drug problem)	086 1755122
● Alcoholics Anonymous, PO Box 137, Eglinton Street, Cork	021 4500481	● M.A.B.S., (Free and confidential service that gives practical support and advice on debt and other financial issues)	021 4552080
● Al-Anon/Alateen Family Groups Ltd, (Support Group for spouses, teenagers and relatives of problem drinkers), PO Box 55, Eglinton Street, Cork	021 4311899	● Samaritans (Provide a listening, befriending service for people who are lonely, suicidal or depressed)	021 4271323
● Narcotics Anonymous, PO Box 89, Eglinton Street, Cork	021 4278411	● Cuan Mhuire, (Residential unit treating alcoholism and drug addiction) 90505 or Bruree, Co. Limerick 90945	063 90555, 90505 or 90945
● Tabor Lodge, (Residential Unit treating alcoholism and drug addiction), Ballindeasig, Belgooly, Co. Cork	021 4887110	● Talbot Grove Treatment Centre, (Residential unit treating alcoholism and drug addiction) Castleisland, Co. Kerry	066 7141511



DRINK RESPONSIBLY

don't bottle it; tackle it!

Making the drinking link...

Alcohol is our favourite drug.

Most of us use it for enjoyment, but sometimes drinking can be a problem. Fights, arguments, money troubles, family upsets, and casual sex are often a result of having too much drink on board.

Alcohol can be the cause of hospital admissions for physical illnesses and accidents. It is, also, important to remember that alcohol has the potential to be addictive.

Alcohol can make you do things you would not normally do.



reflecting on my drinking

- Do I crave a drink at a specific time of the day, like in the morning, after class or work?
- Do I drink to get drunk?
- Do I continue to drink even after my friends have said they have had enough?
- Have friends or family expressed concern about my drinking?
- Do I sometimes drink to cope with a problem or to help me sleep?
- Do I feel guilty about my drinking at times?
- Is my drinking having an effect on my studies, work or finances?
- Is my drinking having an effect on my health?
- Do I sometimes have difficulty remembering events after drinking?
- Do I often regret what I have done or said after drinking?
- Do I get headaches/hangovers or sometimes pass out when I have been drinking?
- Have I acted out of character after drinking (been in an argument, fight or dispute with authorities)?
- Have I ever been involved in an accident after drinking?

It is reassuring to know that **you are not alone**. There can be underlying problems and pressures contributing to your drinking. Beginning to accept that alcohol is or has the potential to be a problem in your life is the first step in getting help. **If you find yourself answering yes to two or more of these questions, you may find the contacts above helpful...**

taking control and staying within low risk drinking limits

Try to cut down to low risk drinking levels by using the Standard Drinking Guide.

In Ireland, a standard drink is 10 grams of pure alcohol, normally contained in...



For drinking to be considered 'low risk', the Department of Health and Children advises:

Adult women should drink less than **14** standard drinks per week;

Adult men should drink less than **21** standard drinks per week.

These are low risk weekly limits, which should be spread over the week and not saved for a single drinking occasion.

Caution: These guidelines do not apply to people who are pregnant, ill, run down, on medication or to children.

party safely

We all make mistakes and do things we regret from time to time. It is important to learn from these mistakes and start afresh. Try to take control of the situation the next time by following some safety measures:

- Be mindful of the risks of getting drunk: hangover, embarrassment, and unsafe sex;
- Try not to drink when you're feeling down or angry, as it is likely to make matters worse;
- If you are trying to cut down, avoid social situations where drinking is the main focus of the evening.

plan your evening

- Decide your limit and stick to it. If you usually drink until the money runs out, take less cash and leave the credit cards at home.
- List your trigger situations and work out how to handle them.
- Go out later so you start drinking later.
- If you drink at home, control the measures (use smaller glasses or a spirit measure).
- Make arrangements to get home safely with friends or pre-book a taxi.
- Pace yourself, eat before you drink to slow the alcohol absorption rate and alternate non alcoholic drinks between alcoholic drinks.

- Avoid situations that are likely to get you drunk fast such as rounds, drinking games, or mixing drinks of different strengths.
- Avoid sexual situations that you may regret later. If you do have sex, use a condom.
- Don't drive, swim, or use machinery after drinking.
- Mixing alcohol with other drugs is very dangerous. The effects of each mix are unpredictable and could lead to overdose.



keep a drinking diary

This is a useful way of monitoring how many standard drinks you drink a week and will reveal whether you are drinking within low risk guidelines. It will also help you identify situations that are best avoided if you are trying to cut down. Counting the cost of your drinking could provide that added incentive to find alternative ways to spend your hard earned cash.

	AM, PM or evening	Where and with who	Drink type(s)	Reason for drinking	No. of standard drinks
m					
t					
w					
t					
f					
s					
s					
total estimated cost					€

did you know?

- It takes **one hour** for a healthy liver to break down one standard drink and there is no way of speeding this up!
- Cutting down on alcohol is one way to control your weight. All alcoholic drinks contain calories, for example one pint of beer (lager, stout, ale) contains about 200 calories. This is around the same amount as in a bar of chocolate, an ice-cream or a bag of crisps.
- Heavy drinking can contribute to overweight (beer-belly), obesity and poor nutrition.