

## **Alcohol self-assessment**

### **Are you drinking too much?**

If you're not really sure about the amount you are drinking take this short test.

It'll help you to assess the effects of your drinking and if it suggests you're drinking too much you'll get advice on how to cut down or seek further help.

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **1.How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?**

- a) Never (0 points)
- b) Once a month or less (1 points)
- c) 2 to 4 times a month (2 points)
- d) 2 to 3 times a week (3 points)
- e) 4 or more times a week (4 points)

#### **2.How many units of alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?**

- 1-2 (0 points)
- 3-4 (1 point)
- 5-6 (2 points)
- 7-9 (3 points)
- 10 + (4 points)

#### **What is a unit?**

You can't just count each drink as a unit of alcohol. The number of units depends on the different strength and size of each drink, so it can vary a lot.

Here's some examples:

- Pint of beer, 4%, is 2.3 units
- 500ml can of strong lager, 6%, 3 units
- 250ml glass of wine, 11%, 2.8 units
- 330ml can of cider, 5%, 1.7 units
- Single (25ml) measure of spirits (e.g. vodka or gin), 1 unit

### **3. How often do you have six or more units on one occasion?**

- a) Never (0 points)
- b) Less than monthly (1 points)
- c) Monthly (2 points)
- d) Weekly (3 points)
- e) Daily or almost daily (4 points)

#### What's binge drinking?

Binge drinking usually refers to drinking lots of alcohol in a short space of time or drinking to get drunk.

There is no consistently agreed measure of binge drinking but drinking more than eight units on any day for men, and more than six units for women, is the measure normally used.

The vital thing is to avoid drinking heavily in one session or drinking to intoxication.

Binge drinking is a major factor in accidents, violence and anti-social behaviour.

### **4. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected from you because of your drinking?**

- a) Never (0 points)
- b) Less than monthly (1 points)
- c) Monthly (2 points)
- d) Weekly (3 points)
- e) Daily or almost daily (4 points)

**5. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?**

- a) Never (0 points)
- b) Less than monthly (1 points)
- c) Monthly (2 points)
- d) Weekly (3 points)
- e) Daily or almost daily (4 points)

**6. How often during the last year have you needed an alcoholic drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?**

- a) Never (0 points)
- b) Less than monthly (1 point)
- c) Monthly (2 points)
- d) Weekly (3 points)
- e) Daily or almost daily (4 points)

**7. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?**

- a) Never (0 points)
- b) Less than monthly (1 points)
- c) Monthly (2 points)
- d) Weekly (3 points)
- e) Daily or almost daily (4 points)

**8.How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because you had been drinking?**

- a) Never (0 points)
- b) Occasionally (1 point)
- c) Monthly (2 points)
- d) Weekly (3 points)
- e) Daily (4 points)

**9.Have you or somebody else been injured as a result of your drinking?**

- a) No, this has never happened (0 points)
- b) Yes, but not in the past year (2 points)
- c) Yes, during the past year (4 points)

**10.Has a relative, friend, doctor or health worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?**

- a) No, never (0 points)
- b) Yes, but not in the past year (2 points)
- c) Yes, during the past year (4 points)

## **RESULTS**

### **0-8 points**

Based on your answers today you're drinking in a way that is sociable and is unlikely to harm your health.

As long as your drinking does remain within recommended levels, there is only a low risk that the way you drink will contribute to future health problems.

The NHS recommends that women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units a day and men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units a day.

Remember, there can be risks from one-off episodes of heavy drinking too.

### **8-20 points**

Based on your answers today your drinking does appear to be putting you at increased risk of developing health problems, so you might want to think about cutting down.

The following can help you cut down:

- Work out a daily limit and stick to it.
- Do more activities that don't involve drinking.
- Eat before and while you're drinking.
- Don't let anyone top up your drinks.
- Tell your friends you're cutting down.
- Count your units.

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### **20-100 points**

Based on your answers today your drinking is already causing you problems.

The NHS recommends that women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units a day and men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units a day.

You may want help to reduce your drinking. You can find local alcohol services through the 'Find services' section of NHS Choices or your GP will be able to help you find them. You can also contact the National Drinkline 0800 917 8282 open 24 hours, seven days a week.