

Patient Support Worksheet: Supporting Your Commitment To Reduce Your Drinking

About this worksheet

In talking to your healthcare professional you have already taken the first step towards overcoming your alcohol problem.

This booklet is designed to support you in making the best of your commitment to reduce your alcohol consumption. It is intended to complement the regular support you will receive from your healthcare professional. The goal is to get you back in control of your alcohol consumption and to reduce the amount that you drink. In time, you may decide to completely give-up drinking alcohol.

You are not alone

When it comes to excess alcohol consumption, it is important to remember that you are not alone.

Alcohol dependence usually involves the desire, often strong and sometimes overpowering, to drink alcohol.¹

Unfortunately, drinking over guideline levels in the UK is not unusual. A large survey was carried out in 2006 with members of the public; this survey found that 27% of adult men and 15% of adult women drink above the recommended weekly guidelines.²

So this means drinking more alcohol per week than this..



21 units per week



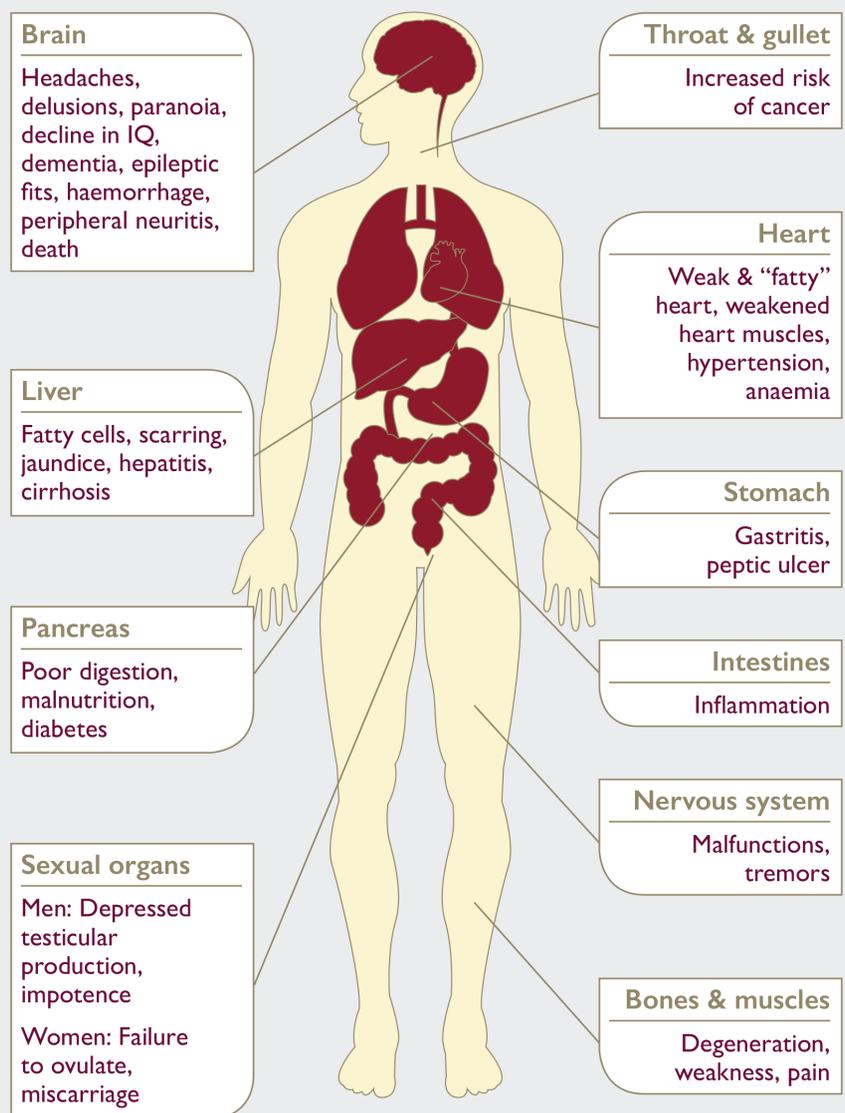
14 units per week

Excessive alcohol consumption comes with negative consequences

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

This diagram shows the many health problems that may be caused by drinking too much alcohol.

Excessive alcohol consumption can harm many different parts and systems of the body³⁻⁵



Positive motivations for change

There are many good reasons to reduce the amount you drink. Take a look at all the positive reasons for change shown below⁶ – which of these mean the most to you?

Social well being
home life
marriage work
friendships social life
studies

Psychological
depression stress
anxiety aggression
memory

Your physical health
weight
blood pressure
cancers stroke
liver disease
fertility

- It is important to remember that cutting down the amount of alcohol you drink can lead to rapid improvements in your short-term health status and reduce your risk of long-term illness⁶⁻⁸
- This can include rapid improvements in liver disease, depression and blood pressure^{6,7}

Targets, rules and coping

Setting realistic targets for yourself*

Think about why you want to make changes to your drinking habits. What are your top three reasons?
I want to reduce my alcohol intake because...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Next, using the table below set some achievable goals to aim for. Here you can record your current drinking levels, your new targets and whether you reached them.

You may want to just start with one week first and then revisit longer term goals at a later date. If you don't manage to achieve your target then discuss this with your healthcare professional and take time to look through this booklet again and think of how you can approach it the following week.

	Your current daily units	Your new target What is your reduced drinking goal	How did you do? Record whether or not you drank and how many units
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Month 2			
Month 3			
Months 4 - 6			

Set some rules to help you stay on target

Setting your own drinking rules can be a good way to help you to cut down.

Examples of drinking rules might be:*

- a. I will have an extra alcohol free day this week
- b. I will not drink more than 2 units a day
- c. I will take up a new activity to do at the time I usually drink
- d. I will watch the TV without having a drink
- e. I will not socialise with heavy drinkers

Think about what will work for you. What rules will you set to help you reduce your intake?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Coping with difficult situations

Sooner or later you are likely to face a difficult situation, something that challenges your good intentions. Thinking ahead to those situations, are there any strategies that might help you to cope?

Examples of a coping strategy might be:*

- a. Quench your thirst with non-alcohol drinks before alcohol
- b. Switch to lower strength alcohol beer/lager
- c. Plan alternative activities at those times when you are at increased risk of drinking
- d. Go for a walk or take some exercise instead
- e. Plan alternative after-work activities
- f. Explore other interests such as the cinema, or a new hobby
- g. Avoid drinking in rounds or in large groups

What are your likely high risk situations? What will you do to cope?

Jot your ideas down here and remember to come back to this page whenever you are concerned about an upcoming situation. Be sure to take note of your successes and what works best for you.

	High risk situation	How do you aim to cope?
1.		
2.		
3.		

It's also a good idea to let your family, friends and colleagues know that you are cutting down, and ask them to be supportive. You never know, they may have some good ideas to help you and their support could make a big difference.

*Information adapted from Screening and Intervention Programme for Sensible drinking (SIPS).⁹

Drinks diary

Here you can keep track of the units you drink each day

Month 1

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

Month 2

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

Month 3

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

Month 4

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

Month 5

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

Month 6

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

Month 7

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

Month 8

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption



Month 9

Month 10

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

Drinks Calendar

Record the number of standard units consumed on each day:

WEEK 1

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 2

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 3

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

WEEK 4

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	TOTAL
Units: _____							

Total of weeks 1-4 = _____ /28 = _____ average daily consumption

1. World Health Organization (WHO) ICD-10. 1992. Available at <http://www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/GRNBOOK.pdf>. Last accessed February 2015.
2. WHO collaborative project on identification and management of alcohol-related problems in primary healthcare. Report on phase IV. 2006.
3. Anderson P et al (eds) Alcohol in the European Union. Consumption, harm and policy approaches; Copenhagen, WHO, 2012.
4. Babor TF et al. AUDIT: The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test, Guidelines for use in primary care; 2nd ed, Geneva, WHO, 2001.
5. Adapted from A-team alcohol services, England. Available at: http://www.alcohol-services-ateam.org.uk/effects_of_alcohol.html. Last accessed: April 2015
6. Anderson P, Baumberg B. Alcohol in Europe. A Public Health Perspective A report for the European Commission; Institute of Alcohol Studies, UK, 2006.
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9. Screening and Intervention Programme for Sensible drinking (SIPS). Available at: <http://www.sips.iop.kcl.ac.uk/>. Last accessed April 2015.

