

P612: Appendix 4

SENSIBLE DRINKING GUIDELINES

- 1.1 Sensible drinking is drinking in a way that is unlikely to cause yourself or others significant risk of harm.
- 1.2 The Government advises that:
 - Adult women should not regularly drink more than 2 - 3 units of alcohol a day
 - Adult men should not regularly drink more than 3 - 4 units of alcohol a day
 - Pregnant women or women trying to conceive should avoid drinking alcohol.
 - If pregnant women do choose to drink, to protect the baby they should not drink more than 1 – 2 units of alcohol once or twice a week and should not get drunk.
 - A further recommendation is that everyone should aim to have two alcohol free days each week.
- 1.3 The risk of harm from drinking above sensible levels increases the more alcohol that you drink, and the more often you drink over these levels.
- 1.4 Sensible drinking also involves a personal assessment of the particular risks and responsibilities of drinking at the time, e.g. it is sensible not to drink when driving or when taking certain medications.

Binge Drinking

- 1.5 Binge drinking is essentially drinking too much alcohol over a short period of time e.g. over the course of an evening, and it is typically drinking that leads to drunkenness. It has immediate and short-term risks to the drinker and to those around them.
- 1.6 Further information on calculating the units of alcohol in drinks is available on the NHS Choices website:
<http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Alcohol-unit-calculator.aspx>
- 1.7 People who become drunk are much more likely to be involved in an accident or assault, be charged with a criminal offence, contract a sexually transmitted disease or. For women, are more likely to have an unplanned pregnancy.
- 1.8 After an episode of heavy drinking, it is advisable to refrain from drinking for 48 hours to allow the body to recover.

What is a unit?

- 1.9 A unit of alcohol is 10ml of pure alcohol. Counting units of alcohol can help to keep track of the amount drunk.