

# a quick question



**Is your drinking affecting your life, your work, your relationships, your health?**

**Do you know how much is too much?**

**This leaflet is designed to encourage you to consider drinking less.**

**Did you know:** 1 standard drink contains 10g of pure alcohol



...and some drinks are more than one standard drink



### ARE YOU AT RISK FROM DRINKING ALCOHOL?

Risk	Men	Women	Common effects
Low risk	17 standard drinks or fewer per week with two alcohol-free days	11 standard drinks or fewer per week with two alcohol-free days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased relaxation</li> <li>Sociability</li> </ul>
Increased risk	18 to 40 standard drinks per week	12 to 28 standard drinks per week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less energy</li> <li>Depression/stress</li> <li>Insomnia</li> <li>Impotence</li> <li>Risk of injury</li> <li>High blood pressure</li> </ul>
High risk	41 or more standard drinks per week	29 or more standard drinks per week	All of the above and... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memory loss</li> <li>Risk of liver disease</li> <li>Risk of cancer</li> <li>Risk of alcohol dependence</li> </ul>

**How many standard drinks  
do you drink in a week?**

**For drinking to be considered “low-risk”, the HSE advises:**

**11**

**Adult women** should drink less than 11 standard drinks per week

**17**

**Adult men** should drink less than 17 standard drinks per week

### **How do you feel?**

Your screening score suggests you appear to be drinking at a rate that increases your risk of harm and you might be at risk of problems in the future. What do you think?

### **The benefits of cutting down:**

#### **Physical**

- Reduced risk of injury
- Reduced risk of high blood pressure.
- Reduced risk of cancer
- Reduced risks of liver disease
- Reduced risks of brain damage
- Sleep better
- More energy
- Lose weight
- No hangovers
- Improved memory
- Better physical shape

#### **Psychological/Social/Financial**

- Improved mood
- Improved relationships
- Reduced risk of drink driving
- Save money

#### **Improved mood due to**

- Less stress
- Clearer thinking
- Better judgement
- Meeting more of my own personal standards

## 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 aware of the risks of getting drunk; hangover, injury, embarrassment and unsafe sex;
- Try not to drink when you're feeling angry, sad or confused, as it's more likely to make matters worse;
- If you are trying to cut down, avoid social situations where drinking is the main focus of the evening, or choose soft drinks.

## 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 down the rate your body absorbs the alcohol in your drink and switch between non alcoholic and 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 medicine or drugs is very dangerous. The effects of each mix are unpredictable and could lead to overdose.

If you have any concerns having read this leaflet contact your local HSE Drugs and Alcohol Service. Look at [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie), call the HSE infoline on 1850 24 1850 or log onto [www.drugs.ie](http://www.drugs.ie)