

Hazardous or Harmful or Dependent Alcohol options



Issue or Problem	Options	Benefits	Serious Harms and Side Effects
High blood pressure or overweight	Cut back alcohol	BP drops 30% of people with high blood pressure reduced their blood pressure by 10 by reducing their alcohol intake.	None
Anxious about your future health: Risk of cancer Risk of liver disease Risk of brain damage and dementia Risk of injury	Cut back alcohol	A longer, happier and healthier life. 	None
Anxiety, depression and poor sleep. Hassle from family and poor relationships. Money problems and drink-driving	Cut back alcohol	Anxiety and depression will not get better without tackling alcohol difficulties. Avoid problems with the police and poverty.	None
Low-energy levels, Poor physical shape. Poor memory	Cut back alcohol	More energy, better memory and better physical health. 	None
Hazardous (15-40 units) or Harmful Alcohol (40+) consumption	Alcohol Brief Interventions e.g. SBI tools used by clinicians	If a clinician makes a link between drinking and a patient's health concern at least 5% will change their behaviour (NNT 20)	None
Alcohol dependence	Support from alcohol and substance misuse services	Proven but variable 	None except time commitment and travel
Alcohol dependence	Baclofen 10mg at night or possibly 3 times a day	20-50% cut back enormously or abstain. NNT 2-8. Also effective for anxiety or difficulty sleeping. 	Drowsiness or even confusion. Constipation. Improve with reducing dose or stopping.
Cutting back alcohol	Action plan		
<p>What targets should you aim for? </p> <p><i>Ideally:</i> Three or less units or standard drinks daily 14 or less units weekly <i>For dependent drinkers: no alcoholic drinks safe</i></p> <p>Everyone should have at least 2 days alcohol free per week. Remember: nobody is perfect! If you don't succeed, try again.</p> <p>If you are a dependent drinker: don't go cold turkey. Get support from alcohol services or your GP. Consider baclofen.</p>	An alcohol free day per week, then 2, then 3, then 4		
	Have your first alcoholic drink after starting to eat		
	Quench your thirst with non-alcoholic drinks before alcohol		
	Avoid drinking in round or in large groups		
	Switch to low alcohol beer or lager		
	Take smaller sips		
	Plan activities and tasks at times that you usually drink		
	When bored or stressed have a workout instead drinking		
	Explore interests – cinema, exercise etc		
	Avoid going to the pub after work		
	Avoid all limit time spent with heavy drinking friends		
	Lots of other choices. List your own:		