

Fact sheet - alcohol

In large quantities, alcohol acts like a poison and damages the body - especially the liver. For moderate drinkers, there are 2 problems with alcoholic drinks. Firstly, they have a lot of calories, so drinking too much can lead to excess fat. Secondly, they have very little or none of the nutrients and vitamins we need, so people who replace some of their meals with alcoholic drinks will be missing out on a lot of very important nutrients.

Tips:

- half a pint of beer = a single measure of spirits = a small glass of sherry = a glass of wine = one unit
- men should not drink more than 2-3 pints (or their equivalent) 2 or 3 times per week
- Women should not drink more than 2 or 3 units 2-3 times per week
- choose a drink with fewer calories
- if you cut back on beer and find you start getting constipated, don't be discouraged. Combat this by eating more fibre-rich foods
- if you are planning to have a baby or if you are pregnant, the less alcohol you drink, the better your chances of a successful pregnancy and a healthy baby
- mix spirits with low calorie mixers