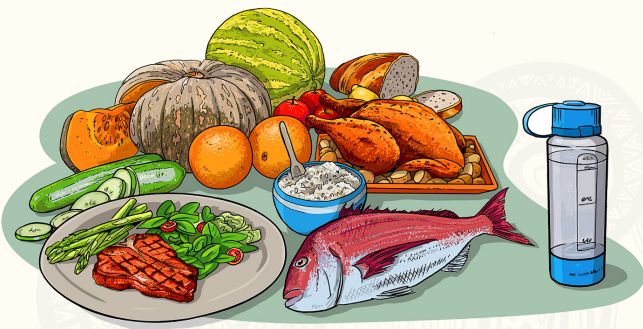


## If you do choose to drink alcohol there are some things you can do to reduce harm

- Eat before drinking – a proper meal not just snack food.
- Avoid salty foods – you will drink more.
- Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- Start with a non-alcoholic drink.
- Drink slowly, pace yourself, space your drinks and put your glass or can down between sips.
- Drink light beers or shandies, half measures of spirits and mix wine with soda and lots of ice.
- Count your drinks, use a standard glass and don't let people top up your glass.
- Decide your limit and refuse drinks when you have reached your limit.
- Make sure someone who is not drinking is looking after the kids.
- Stay busy doing other things like dancing, singing, yarnning and playing pool.
- Drink in a safe place and have a plan to get home safely.
- Do not drive and do not get in the car with someone who has been drinking.



## There are a lot of things you can do with family and friends without alcohol



## For more information and help

Local Contact

### Alcohol & Drug Support Line

The Alcohol and Drug Support Line can provide information about culturally secure alcohol and drug services in your area. They are a confidential, 24 hour, statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about their own or another person's alcohol or other drug use. Call backs are available.

**Ph** 9442 5000 or 1800 198 024 (country callers)

**Em** [alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au](mailto:alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au)

**Web** [alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au](http://alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au)

### Parent & Family Drug Support Line

Confidential, 24 hour, statewide telephone counselling, information and referral service for anyone concerned about a loved one's alcohol or other drug use. Parent callers can speak to a Parent Peer Volunteer with a lived experience of their own son or daughter's alcohol or other drug use. Call backs are available.

**Ph** 9442 5050 or 1800 653 203 (country callers)

**Em** [alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au](mailto:alcoholdrugsupport@mhc.wa.gov.au)

**Web** [alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au](http://alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au)

Produced by Strong Spirit Strong Mind™

Aboriginal Programs

[www.strongspiritstrongmind.com.au](http://www.strongspiritstrongmind.com.au)



**Mental Health  
Commission**



Brochure design by Nani Creative  
The Aboriginal Inner Spirit Model (Ngarlu Assessment Model) was developed by Joseph 'Nipper' Roe, who belonged to the Karajarri and Yawuru people.  
Illustrations: Patrick Bayly, Workspace Design.  
© Mental Health Commission 2020



## Reducing Risk

Aboriginal ways of reducing harm from alcohol and other drugs



What is alcohol?

- Alcohol is a depressant. It slows down your brain and this affects the way you think, feel and behave.
- Alcohol is a very strong drug and can be toxic, large quantities of alcohol are poisonous.
- Beer, wine, spirits, liqueurs, ports, sherries and homebrew all contain different amounts of alcohol.
- The more alcohol a drink contains the stronger it will be.

How alcohol works

When you drink alcohol it gets into your bloodstream, it circulates around your body and some goes to your brain.

Alcohol slows down your brain and affects the way it carries messages. It also affects how your brain talks to other parts of your body. At first you might feel relaxed and happy.

At the same time your liver is working really hard to break down the alcohol and clear any toxins out of your body. A healthy liver can break down about 1 standard drink per hour. If you are drinking faster than your body can get rid of the alcohol you will get increasingly drunk, and the alcohol may begin to cause some damage.

That is why it is really important to drink slowly and safely and not drink more than the recommended amounts.



Standard Drinks

Alcoholic drinks contain different amounts of alcohol. The standard drinks symbol shows approximately how much alcohol each type of drink contains. Different brands can contain different amounts so it is always a good idea to check the label.



What is a Standard Drink?

If you drink, it is important to keep track of how much alcohol you are drinking. Standard drinks can help you to work this out, because a standard drink measures the amount of pure alcohol in a drink, not the amount of liquid.

One standard drink contains about 10 grams of pure alcohol.



Each of these drinks is a standard drink, they all contain about 10 grams of pure alcohol.

All cans and bottles that contain alcohol should have a label which tells you approximately how many standard drinks they contain.



Following the Alcohol Guidelines can help reduce the risk of harm

Some risks from drinking alcohol are alcohol-related injuries such as road trauma, violence, falls, burns and other accidents. To reduce these risks, if you are a healthy man or woman, you should not have more than 4 standard drinks on any single occasion.

Some of the health risks from drinking alcohol build up over your lifetime. This means the more you drink the greater the risk. **To reduce your risk of alcohol-related disease or injury over your lifetime you should not drink more than 4 standard drinks on any one day or 10 standard drinks in a week.**

These Guidelines do not apply to young people or women who are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding. For children and young people under 18 years of age, not drinking alcohol is the safest option. Do not drink alcohol if you are pregnant or planning a baby because alcohol can cause permanent harm to your unborn child. If you are taking medications, or have physical or mental health conditions you should check with your doctor whether it is safe for you to drink alcohol.



You should not drink alcohol alone, when planning to drive, operating machinery, or do things like hunting, fishing, boating, and going bush. Alcohol will affect your judgement and your behaviour, and you may put yourself and other people at risk.