

Alcohol Drinking Guidelines

If you are taking medications, or have physical or mental health conditions then you should check with your doctor to see whether it is safe for you to drink alcohol.

For children and young people under 18 years of age, not drinking alcohol is the safest option.

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

Other health risks from drinking alcohol build up over your lifetime. This means the more you drink the greater the risk and harm.

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 a week.

You should not drink alcohol when you are 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.

- NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council)

What is harmful drinking?

Harmful drinking is when you have more than the recommended daily amount.

Harmful drinking can damage your health and can lead to alcohol poisoning. Harmful drinking is dangerous because there is an increased risk that you will get drunk or intoxicated.



Getting help and information

If you are thinking about reducing your alcohol use you might like some help or information. Or if you are worried about somebody and how their alcohol use is affecting you and your family, perhaps you would like some help with this issue as well.

Sometimes people don't get help because they feel shame talking about how alcohol is affecting them and their families. Aboriginal Alcohol and Other Drug Workers, Aboriginal Health Workers or other health professionals are there to help you. They will not put you down or judge you. They will listen and help you work out what you want to do and discuss ways to reduce harm, cut down or stop using. They can show you ways to reduce harm, cut down or stop using.

It may not be easy reducing your alcohol use but your friends, family, and other people in your community can support you to make changes.



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

Web 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

Web alcoholdrugsupport.mhc.wa.gov.au

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Aboriginal Programs

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The Aboriginal Inner Spirit Model (Ngarlu Assessment Model) was developed by Joseph 'Nipper' Roe, who belonged to the Karajarri and Yawuru people.

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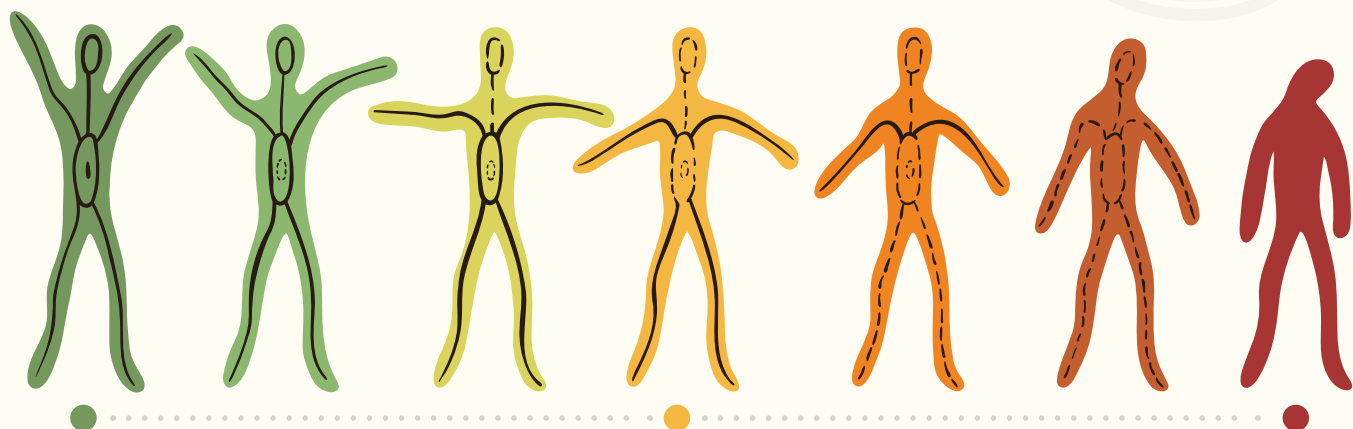
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What Our Men Need to Know About Alcohol

Aboriginal ways of reducing harm from alcohol and other drugs

Alcohol and other drugs can weaken your inner spirit and your connections to family, community and country



People who don't use at all

- o Strong Spirit
- o Strong Family
- o Strong Community
- o Strong Country

People who use a lot

- o Weak Spirit
- o Angry & Worried Family
- o Worried Community
- o OK Country

People who use all the time

- o No Spirit
- o Sad Family
- o Sad Community
- o No Country

Our Inner Spirit is the centre of our being and emotions.

When our spirit feels strong our mind feels strong.

When our spirit feels tangled our mind feels tangled.

Strong Inner Spirit is what keeps people healthy and keeps them connected together.

Strong Inner Spirit keeps our family strong, our community strong and our country alive.

How is alcohol affecting your inner spirit and your connections to family, community and country?

What is alcohol?

Alcohol is a depressant which affects the way you think, feel and behave. Alcohol is a very strong drug and it can have toxic effects. Large quantities of alcohol are poisonous.

Beer, wine, spirits, liqueur, port, sherry and homebrew all contain different amounts of alcohol. The more alcohol a drink contains the stronger it will be.

Approx. One Standard Drink



30ml Nip Spirits



100ml Wine



375ml Mid Strength Beer

How alcohol works

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

Alcohol slows down your brain activity and affects the way it carries messages. It also affects how your brain talks to other parts of your body. At first you may feel relaxed and happy, however these feelings can change the more you drink and lead to feelings of anger, confusion or deep sadness.

When you drink, 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 one standard drink per hour. If you are drinking faster than your body can get rid of alcohol, you will get increasingly drunk and the alcohol may begin to cause some damage.

How harmful alcohol use can affect your body

Brain

Brain damage, memory loss, blackouts, hallucinations, fits, confusion, dementia, mental health problems, depression, anxiety and mood swings

Nervous System

Tingling, numbness and loss of feeling

Muscles

Weak, loose muscle tissue

Breast

Increased risk of breast cancer

Liver

Damaged and swollen, cirrhosis, hepatitis, cancer

Kidneys

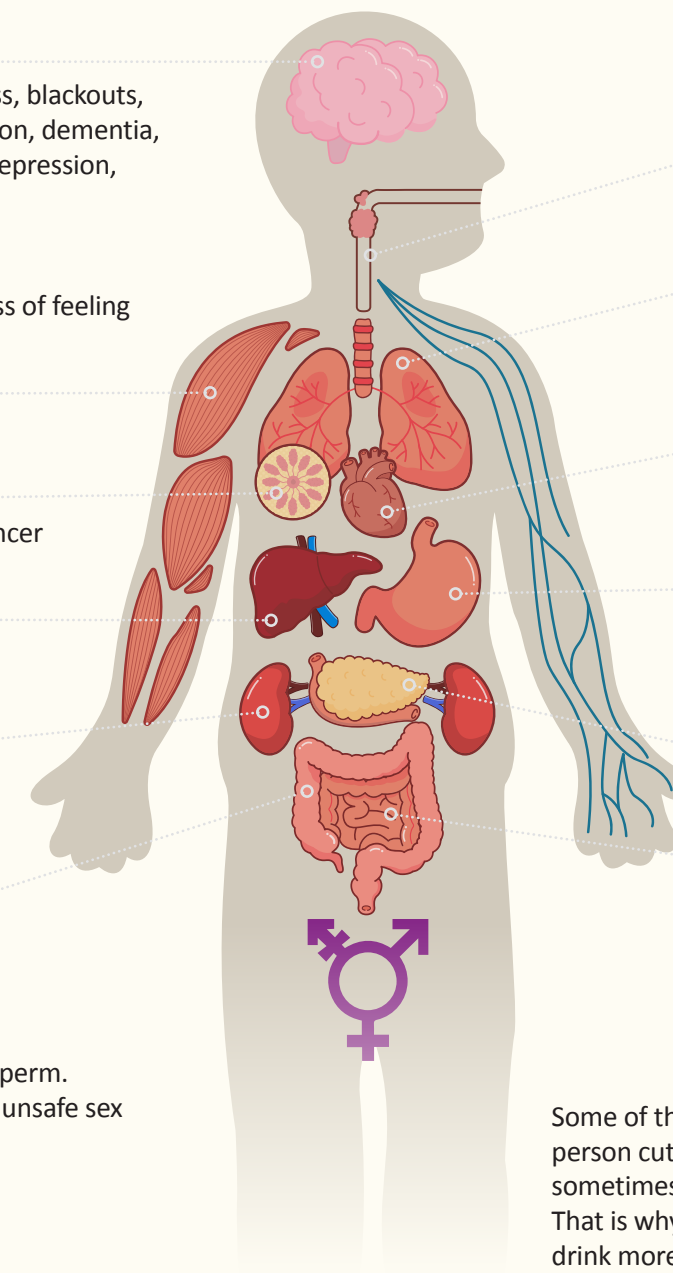
Reduced function and increased infections

Colon and Rectum

Cancer

Reproduction

Impotence and damaged sperm. Risk of STIs and BBVs from unsafe sex



Throat

Chronic coughing and cancer

Lungs

Reduced resistance to infection, coughs, colds, risk of pneumonia, and TB

Heart

Irregular pulse, high blood pressure, becomes enlarged

Stomach

Ulcers, inflammation, vomiting and diarrhoea

Pancreas

Pancreatitis

Intestines

Ulcers

Some of these problems will improve if the person cuts down or stops drinking, but sometimes not all problems will go away. That is why it is really important to not drink more than the recommended levels.