

Key messages for Alcohol Awareness Week 2019

Background

When?

11-17 November 2019

What?

Alcohol Awareness Week is a chance for the UK to get thinking about drinking. It's a week of awareness-raising, campaigning for change, and more. The theme for Alcohol Awareness Week 2019 is 'Alcohol and me'.

Who?

Alcohol Awareness Week is coordinated by the charity Alcohol Change UK. Over 3,000 public health teams, workplaces, GP surgeries, pharmacies, hospitals, charities and other community groups across the country are taking part in and organising events for the week.

#AlcoholAwarenessWeek

Alcohol Change UK

Alcohol Change UK works for a society that is free from the harm caused by alcohol. We create evidence-driven change by working towards five key changes: improved knowledge, better policies and regulation, shifted cultural norms, improved drinking behaviours, and more and better support and treatment.

Find out more: www.alcoholchange.org.uk

Key messages

The key message for Alcohol Awareness Week is that alcohol can have a big impact on our bodies, our lives and those we love, even without us realising it. And by making changes to our drinking we can become healthier and reduce our risk for many serious health conditions including seven forms of cancer, mental health problems, and liver disease.

Throughout the week Alcohol Change UK and our partners will be:

- Raising awareness of the health risks associated with drinking
- Sharing information on the Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines
- Sharing tips on ways to cut down
- Looking at the impact of alcohol harm on individuals and their families
- Signposting people to help and support, and encouraging them to access it
- Communicating the wider picture of alcohol harm in the UK
- Encouraging collaboration to make change happen

Raising awareness of the health risks associated with drinking

Drinking comes with serious health risks. Cutting down, even a little, can reduce those risks.

Understanding the risks of drinking too much is an important first step in keeping ourselves healthy. Alcohol increases our risk of many serious health conditions including seven forms of cancer, mental health problems, and liver disease. But by making even small changes to our drinking, we can reduce that risk. Throughout Alcohol Awareness Week we and our partners will share the evidence about alcohol to help people make informed choices about their drinking.

Resources available:

- Interactive body map
- Alcohol quiz
- Factsheets
- Posters
- Social media images
- Blogs

Sharing information on the Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines

Your risk is lowest when you stick to the drinking guidelines of 14 units a week or less, spread over three or more days with a few days off.

The Chief Medical Officers (the UK's top doctors) have come up with drinking guidelines to help us make informed choices so that we can better protect our health and wellbeing.

Drinking no more than 14 units a week – that's six pints of beer or cider, or a bottle and a half of wine, per week – helps to keep the health risks associated drinking low.

Throughout the week we and our partners will share information on the low-risk guidelines to help people better understand what healthy drinking looks like and how much is too much.

Resources available:

- Body map tool
- Alcohol quiz
- Alcohol units calculator
- [Check your drinking tool \(AUDIT\)](#)
- Factsheets
- Posters
- Social media images

Sharing tips on ways to cut down

Cutting down can help you to feel healthier and enjoy life more.

Small changes can make a big difference in getting people to reset their relationship with alcohol. We and our partners will be sharing top tips to help people cut down if they choose to and change the way they think about their drinking.

- Alcohol quiz
- Factsheets
- Posters
- Social media images
- Try Dry: the Dry January app, the free app to help people cut down

Looking at the impact of alcohol harm on individuals and their families

Reducing your drinking can benefit not only you, but others around you.

When we reduce our drinking, it often not only improves our own life but the lives of those around us too. Through our blog, we'll be hearing stories from those who have experienced alcohol harm, about the impact this has had on them and their families, and how they have managed to make changes.

- Blogs
- Factsheets
- Social media images

Signposting people to help and support

If you need some support to control your drinking there's help available and there's no shame in seeking it.

If you're concerned about someone you know there are steps you can take to help them, and to make sure you have the support you need.

In England there are an estimated 589,101 dependent drinkers and less than 20% are receiving treatment. Their family members, who also need and deserve support, are often similarly unsupported. Through Alcohol Awareness Week we and our partners will be signposting people to find support that works for them.

- Factsheets
- Posters
- Alcohol Change UK website

Communicating the wider picture of alcohol harm in the UK

Alcohol harm is not inevitable.

Alcohol is a part of many of our lives. We use it for celebration, for comfort, to socialise, to wind down, to cope. We treat it differently to other drugs; it's legal, socially acceptable, even encouraged. Yet in the UK 20 people die every day as a result of their drinking.

Alcohol harm – mental health problems, liver disease, seven forms of cancer, economic difficulties, and so much more – can affect any one of us, from any walk of life. The harm doesn't end with the individual; each of us who drinks too much is part of a family and a

community who feel the effects too, whether through frequent use of emergency services, drink driving, violence or neglect.

The latest figures on alcohol harm show that:

- Each year, alcohol is a factor in the deaths of 24,000 people in the UK
- And is the biggest risk factor for deaths among 15–49 year olds
- Hospital admissions due to alcoholic liver disease in England have increased by 43% in the last 10 years
- In England there are an estimated 589,101 dependent drinkers and less than 20% are receiving treatment
- Around 200,000 children in England are living with an alcohol-dependent parent or carer which can have lifelong negative effects on their health and wellbeing
- Alcohol also has a wider impact on society, where each year alcohol misuse is estimated to cost the NHS £3.5 billion
- Lost productivity due to alcohol leads to an estimated 167,000 working years lost

Reducing serious alcohol harm to individuals and society is far from easy as alcohol plays such a central role in our society. But the costs are too high to ignore; there are far too many personal tragedies and too much public resource spent in addressing the avoidable problems caused by harmful drinking.

Let's work together to raise awareness of the impact of alcohol in the UK, to motivate change at every level.

Resources available:

- [The Alcohol Change report](#) (PDF)
- Social media images
- Posters
- Alcohol Change UK website

Encouraging collaboration to make change happen

Change is happening.

Over 2,000 GP surgeries, charities, local authorities, pharmacies, hospitals and other community groups across the UK have joined this year's Alcohol Awareness Week campaign running events, displays, quizzes, creative performances and more to raise awareness of the harm caused by alcohol.

The time is ripe for serious change so let's work together to make change happen faster.

[Sign up to our newsletter](#) to stay in touch and find out more about what's coming up.

- Sign up to Alcohol Change UK newsletter
- [The Alcohol Change report](#) (PDF)
- Blogs
- Alcohol Change UK website

Throughout the week

Monday: Alcohol and your body

Tuesday: Knowing the risks

Wednesday: Making a change

Thursday: Support for you

Friday: Stories of change

Saturday: Alcohol harm in the UK

Sunday: Together for change

Resources

All of these resources are available [here](#) unless otherwise stated. Please do not share them publicly until 00:01 on Monday 11 November 2019.

Interactive tools

- [Alcohol and your body tool](#) – launching on the Alcohol Change UK website from 00:01 on 11 November.
- [Alcohol quiz](#) – launching on the Alcohol Change UK website from 00:01 on 11 November.
- [Check your drinking quiz \(AUDIT\)](#)
- [Unit calculator](#)

Posters

- Alcohol Awareness Week
- Alcohol and your body
- Alcohol harm in the UK
- Alcohol increases your risk
- Alcohol myth 1: saving units
- Alcohol myth 2: fun without alcohol
- Alcohol myth 3: coffee sobers me up
- Alcohol myth 4: alcohol-free beer
- Alcohol myth 5: the gym
- Alcohol myth 6: alcohol problem
- Download the free app
- Cut down to cut your risk
- If you're worried
- Thinking about your drinking
- Tips for healthy drinking
- Worried about your drinking

Posters in Welsh

- Alcohol Awareness Week
- Alcohol increases your risk
- Thinking about your drinking?
- Download the free app

- Worried about your drinking

Factsheets

- Alcohol and calories
- Alcohol and cancer
- Alcohol and diabetes
- Alcohol and mental health
- Alcohol and parenting
- Alcohol and sex
- Alcohol and the brain
- Alcohol and the heart
- Alcohol and the liver
- Alcohol and workplaces
- Alcohol units
- Am I drinking too much?
- Drinking tips
- Worried about someone else's drinking
- Support with your drinking

Blogs - these will be live on our website from 00:01 on 11 November.

Example social media posts

Social media images

- Alcohol Awareness Week
- Alcohol and your body
- Download the free app
- Get support

Social media images in Welsh

- Alcohol Awareness Week (Facebook and Twitter)
- Download the free app
- Get support

Press release template

Please [get in touch](#) if you would like to find out more.