

## THINGS TO AVOID...

- Drinking regularly (and especially getting drunk) before early adulthood
- Drinking regularly to cope with negative moods or as a major form of recreation
- Driving after drinking, or riding in a vehicle with someone who's been drinking
- Trying to keep up with your friends who drink more or more often than you do

## DID YOU KNOW?

Men and women absorb alcohol differently. Women have less fluid in their bodies to dilute alcohol, and less of an enzyme that breaks down alcohol. So women feel more of the effects, and for a longer time, than men who drink the same amount.

## IF SOMEONE PASSES OUT OR ODS ON ALCOHOL...

- Roll the person on their side (so they won't choke if they throw up)
- Call out for help—stay with the person who's in trouble
- Call (or get someone else to call) 911
- Tell paramedics as much as you can

## GETTING HELP

### Self-help tools:

[www.heretohelp.bc.ca](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca)  
[www.cisur.ca](http://www.cisur.ca)

### Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service:

1-800-663-1441 (BC)  
604-660-9382 (Greater Vancouver)

© 2020

The Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research is proud to be affiliated with HeretoHelp. HeretoHelp is a project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Substance Use Information. The BC Partners are funded by the Provincial Health Services Authority.

 **University of Victoria** | Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research

funding provided by  
 **Provincial Health Services Authority**  
Province-wide solutions.  
Better health.



# SAFER DRINKING

BEER, WINE AND SPIRITS



REDUCE YOUR RISK  
OF PROBLEMS RELATED TO  
DRINKING TOO MUCH, TOO OFTEN  
OR IN RISKY ENVIRONMENTS



# YOU AND SAFER DRINKING

When you enjoy alcohol, it can be easy to get into a routine of drinking too much, too often or in risky environments. Here are some simple things you can do to reduce your risk of harm from alcohol.

## BEFORE YOU START...

### Be clear about why you want to drink

Is it going to help you in some way or make things worse?

**Eat something** Food reduces the speed at which your body absorbs alcohol.

**Know the strength of your alcohol** Look on the label for the percentage of alcohol.

**Set limits on how much you're going to drink** And, commit to sticking to your plan.

## WHILE DRINKING...

### Measure and keep track of your drinks

This will help you avoid drinking more than you wanted.

**Drink slowly** Alternate drinks with water or other non-alcoholic beverages to avoid drinking too much.

### Stay in the company of trusted friends

That way, you won't have to cope alone if something goes wrong.

## WHEN GOING OUT...

**Choose drinking places with care** Look for clean surroundings, good lighting, open queuing, comfortable seating, pleasant noise levels and lots of space. Things can get out of control in places that are too crowded and chaotic.

**Plan a safe way to get home before you even get to your destination** You'll be less tempted to make bad choices if you have a good plan.

**Avoid getting drunk in public** Stay within the national low-risk alcohol drinking guidelines of 4 drinks for men, 3 drinks for women, on any one occasion. Drinking over these limits puts you at risk of making bad choices that may seem fun or funny at the time but may cost you later in terms of your health, relationships, money or the law.

## ONE STANDARD DRINK IS:

**Beer** 350 ml (12 oz) at 5% alcohol

**Wine** 150 ml (5 oz) at 12% alcohol

**Spirits** 40 ml (1.5 oz) at 40% alcohol



## IF YOU'RE PLANNING TO DRINK A LOT...

**Drink with a buddy in a safe place** It may be best to stay at home.

**Stick to one substance at a time** Alcohol can magnify the effects of cannabis and some other drugs in unpredictable ways.

**Stay away from the steering wheel** Stay where you are or make plans to get around by bus, taxi, or ride with someone who hasn't been drinking.

**Avoid having sex with an unfamiliar partner** Carry condoms just in case.

## CHOOSE "NO ALCOHOL" WHEN...

- driving or operating machinery
- needing to be alert, like at work or school
- using other drugs, including medications
- pregnant or breastfeeding
- experiencing health problems (mental or physical)

## TO REDUCE LONG-TERM HEALTH RISKS...

**Avoid daily or almost-daily drinking** Keep one or two days per week alcohol-free, and have no more than 15 drinks per week if you're a man, 10 per week if you're a woman.