



Alcohol

If you are concerned you may be drinking too much?

The first check would be to use the unit calculator. Remember that safe limits for alcohol consumption is 21 units a week for men and 14 units a week for women, with a recommended maximum of 3-4 units for men and 2-3 units for women in 24 hours.

The formula for calculating units of alcohol consumed is:

Volume of liquid (in Mls) x Percentage Volume of alcohol / 1000, e.g.

568mls (**one pint**) of beer x 5 (% of alcohol) / 1000 = **2.84 Units** or

175mls (**one glass**) of wine x 12 (% of alcohol) / 1000 = **2.1 Units** or

25mls (**one measure**) of vodka x 40 (% of alcohol) / 1000 = **1 Unit**

Statistics show we are drinking more at home than in pubs and clubs, which makes it more difficult to measure drinks out. What may be a single to us at home would be a double at a bar.

The second check would be to see if you can have three alcohol free days per week. Alcohol dependence can develop easily at low levels and then progress to harmful levels. Early identification will help you change your drinking patterns, if you want to.

The third check would be to read and ask yourself the following questions:

SELF ASSESSMENT OF ALCOHOL INTAKE

Alcohol is a drug that the majority of people use. Some of us may drink to excess. How do we know if we might have a problem? How can we test ourselves in a scientific way to assess the amount of alcohol we consume is or could become problematic?



The World Health Organisation (WHO) has devised a simple test to establish this. You do not require any training to complete this test which takes approximately five minutes. It is better to identify a problem or potential problem early on so we can change our behaviour and prevent it from getting out of our control.

The name of this simple Alcohol Screen is The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test or AUDIT for short. This is a set of 10 questions about your relationship with alcohol. Simply answer is question honestly. This is done in the privacy of your own home. If a problem is identified then you can then decide if you want help with it. Help can be obtained by contacting your local Alcohol Agency.

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) assigns individuals to one of three categories, depending on their AUDIT total score, which defines their level of risk of harm from excessive alcohol consumption. These three levels are defined to encourage clinicians and consumers to re-address the significance of levels of alcohol consumption that were previously considered less clinically significant. Also, AUDIT suggests the style of psychotherapeutic intervention proven to be most effective at the three levels of alcohol ingestion (Table 1)

Table 1 Intervention Options for Different Levels Identified by Total AUDIT Score

Risk Level	Intervention Option	AUDIT Score
Hazardous Drinking	Brief Intervention Simple Advice	8 - 15
Harmful Drinking	Brief Intervention Counselling Continued Monitoring Diagnostic Evaluation	16 - 19
Possible Alcohol Dependence	Diagnostic Evaluation Detoxification Medical Treatment Mutual Help Organisation	20 +

Source: Bohn, M., J., Babor, T., F. and Kranzler, H., R. (1995)
The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT):
Validation of a Screening Instrument for Use in Medical Settings
Journal of Studies in Alcohol.
56:423-432.



THE ALCOHOL USE DISORDERS IDENTIFICATION TEST (AUDIT)

	0	1	2	3	4	
1	How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never (0)	Monthly or less (1)	2 to 4 times a month (2)	2 to 3 times a week (3)	4 or more times a week (4)
2	How many standard drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?	1 or 2 (0)	3 or 4 (1)	5 or 6 (2)	7 to 9 (3)	10 or more (4)
3	How often do you have 6 or more standard drinks on one occasion?	Never (0)	Less than monthly (1)	Monthly (2)	Weekly (3)	Daily or almost daily (4)
4	How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?	Never (0)	Less than monthly (1)	Monthly (2)	Weekly (3)	Daily or almost daily (4)
5	How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected from you because of your drinking?	Never (0)	Less than monthly (1)	Monthly (2)	Weekly (3)	Daily or almost daily (4)
6	How often during the last year have you needed an alcoholic drink in the morning to get you going after a heavy drinking session?	Never (0)	Less than Monthly (1)	Monthly (2)	Weekly (3)	Daily or almost daily (4)





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7	How often during the last year have you had feelings of guilt or remorse after drinking?	Never (0)	Less than monthly (1)	Monthly (2)	Weekly (3)	Daily or almost daily (4)
8	How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because you had been drinking?	Never (0)	Less than monthly (1)	Monthly (2)	Weekly (3)	Daily or almost daily (4)
9	Have you or someone else been injured as a result of your drinking?	No (0)		Yes, but not in the last year (2)		Yes, during the last year (4)
10	Has a relative or friend, doctor or other health worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?	No (0)		Yes, but not in the last year (2)		Yes, during the last year (4)

Scoring: A score of 8 or more indicates a strong likelihood of Hazardous or Harmful alcohol consumption.	Total Score	A score of 20 or more indicates dependent drinking and appropriate for further assessment by the Alcohol Service
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By adding up the total of scores to each answer you get the Total AUDIT Score. This then places you in one of the above categories. You can print this questionnaire out to complete and if you have concerns about the level of alcohol you are consuming you can bring this completed questionnaire to your first appointment with the Alcohol Service. You can self-refer to the Alcohol Service by telephoning (01248) 718030 to ask for an appointment.



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What to do if you realise you have a problem

Firstly, don't panic or feel anxious - it is important to realise that you are not alone. Don't feel ashamed, be positive, because you can do something about it.

Some people find keeping a drink diary helpful,

Alcohol Diary

Day	Number of Units	Where, When, with Whom?	Total for the Day
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			





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Saturday			
Sunday			
Total for the Week			

Alcohol Treatment Services in Ynys Môn

If you would prefer to talk to someone, in confidence, you can self refer to the **Substance Misuse Service** in Ynys Môn. Here you will be given a key worker, who can offer you a range of treatment options (counselling, group work, peer support, detoxification) so that you get the help you need. The service is open some evenings, so you can go after work. (You can arrange to be seen by your alcohol counsellor at your GP's if you prefer).

To self refer, just call 01248 718030

Helpline for clients/families or professionals 1.00-5.00pm Monday-Friday

01248 718030

Self Help Groups

'Again' self help group based in Holyhead call 01407 761611

Alcoholics Anonymous meet regularly in Bangor. To find out where meetings are near you please call 01248 354888

Al-Anon family group meetings for families and friends of alcoholics

Alateen is also available for 13 to 19 year olds



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Helpline: 020 7403 0888 or www.al-anonuk.org.uk

For group meetings on Anglesey:

Menai Bridge, Friday 12 noon at St Annes Church Hall, Dale Street, Menai Bridge, LL59 5AH.

What if you are concerned about someone else's drinking?

We cannot stop someone else drinking, but we can encourage and help them to make changes by helping them to see the choices that are available. Sometimes the family can unconsciously support the problem drinker in their drinking habits and problem behaviours.

Specialist Young Persons Services

Offering a range of services and interventions to people under 20 years old.

- Youth Offending Team Services
- Providing a full range of treatment interventions for young people with legal problems who use drugs or alcohol in a problematic way
- Specialist family services, provided by qualified Social Workers, including parenting and children's issues.
- Specialist prevention worker
- Specialist health screening, assessments and treatments for young people involved in the social care environment, for substance misuse and mental health.

CAIS Drug and Alcohol Agency 01286 671005

Talk2Frank 0800 776600

Other good alcohol health advice, even if you only drink occasionally....

If you are going out, drinking water at intervals throughout the evening will help with re-hydration.



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Drinking a pint of water before going to bed will help to alleviate the symptoms of hangovers. A hangover is typically caused by dehydration, high body temperature and low blood sugar.

It is advisable that if you have drunk alcohol up to or beyond harmful levels, allow the body 48 hours without alcohol to recover.

You can access more alcohol information on www.drinkaware.co.uk



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