



## Covid-19 - Information for service users

**COVID-19** is an illness caused by a newly identified type of coronavirus, which can cause a respiratory infection and lead to health problems. As we are all aware, this virus is rapidly spreading and affecting people with underlying health conditions. Reliable information can help us to make informed choices about our behaviour to protect ourselves and others.

### How do people get infected with COVID-19?

COVID-19 is spread from person to person by coughing or sneezing and getting exposed to droplets that contain the virus. There are no known risk factors that appear to make a person more or less vulnerable to getting infected with the virus. The main risk is close contact with someone who has it. Covid-19 can be transmitted by kissing or direct contact with bodily fluids.

### How do I reduce the risk of becoming infected with COVID-19?

- Stay 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people where possible
- Wash your hands with soap and hot water frequently or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content
- Keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth
- Cover your cough and sneeze into a tissue or the bend in the elbow. Bin tissues immediately and wash your hands
- Try to minimise sexual or close contact with others and if having sex, use condoms

### Information on using drugs more safely:

- **Equipment** - Make sure you have enough syringes and injecting equipment to last you for a couple of weeks. Use local needle exchanges at pharmacies or Turning Point
- **Don't share** - e-cigs/cigarettes, pipes, bongs or joints, or nasal tubes such as straws. If you do have to share, wipe down mouthpieces with an alcohol swab before sharing or use separate mouthpieces. Put used smoking, snorting, and injecting equipment in a bio-bucket so people know they are used.
- **Prepare your drugs yourself** - wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and water and prepare your own drugs. Wipe down surfaces before and after use, with microbial wipes, alcohol (at least 70%), or bleach. If you can't prepare your own drugs, stay with the person who is. Get them to wash their hands thoroughly and to clean up before and after.
- **Reduce risk of overdose** – make sure you have enough naloxone. If using alone, try to use less and go slowly. If using with others, make a plan with them to use at different times if possible. Emergency services may take longer to respond to 999 calls due to Covid-19 demands so planning and naloxone are even more important.
- **If someone else gets sick** – call emergency services if necessary and keep physical distance

### If you start to feel unwell

Let your worker know as soon as possible - get a friend or family member to call if you need to. Stay in touch with us and either call us or the pharmacist if you are not able to pick up your script. You can nominate someone else to collect it, let us know who that is and we can contact the pharmacy.



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### Reducing drinking safely when drinking dependently

Welcome to the Reducing Drinking Safely 'Find Out More' guide. This is a one-off information guide about how to reduce your drinking safely if having to wait for a planned alcohol detoxification due to the COVID-19 situation.

- If you are interested in knowing more, this session will help you to consider:
- Your daily alcohol pattern and calculating units of alcohol per day
- Making a plan for safe alcohol reduction
- Planning for if you need to change your brand or type of alcohol
- Some tips to help with safe alcohol reduction
- What to do if you get withdrawal symptoms from alcohol
- Where to get more information and support

### Your daily drinking pattern

to be able to plan a period of safe reduction, it is important to know how much you are drinking now. Start by writing down each drink you have and the time of day you have it. Try to measure your drinks if drinking from a bottle of spirits or wine. It is enough just to jot down what, how much and when you have a drink.

### Working out your daily units

Work out how many units you are drinking per say by using this unit calculator



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### GLASS OF RED, WHITE OR ROSE WINE (ABV 13%)



Small 125ml

**1.6 UNITS**



Standard 175ml

**2.3 UNITS**



Large 250ml

**3.3 UNITS**

### BEER, LAGER AND CIDER

REGULAR (ABV 4%)



**2.3 UNITS**



**1.8 UNITS**

STRONG (ABV 5.2%)



**3 UNITS**



**2.2 UNITS**

EXTRA STRONG (ABV 8%)



**4.5 UNITS**



**3.5 UNITS**

### 750ML BOTTLE OF RED, WHITE OR ROSE WINE (ABV 13.5%)



**10 UNITS PER BOTTLE**

### OTHER DRINKS

25ML SINGLE SPIRIT AND MIXER (ABV 40%)

**1 UNIT**

275ML BOTTLE OF PRE-MIXED DRINK (ALCOPOP) (ABV 5.5%)

**1.5 UNITS**

For a few days, keep your drinking the same at the beginning and end of the day but try to space out the drinks in the middle of the day. Try adding water or a mixer to drinks or alternate between alcohol and soft drinks during the day.

#### Make a safe reduction plan

You can safely reduce by 10% of your units each day, or if it is easier to calculate, by 1-2 units per day. Here are some examples of a reduction plan:

If you drinking a bottle of spirits daily (40 units) plus 4 cans of higher strength cider (16 units)

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<b>Week 1</b>	56	54	52	50	48	46	44
<b>Week 2</b>	42	40	38	36	34	32	30
<b>Week 3</b>	28	26	24	22	20	18	17
<b>Week 4</b>	16	15	14	13	12	11	10

If you are drinking 8 cans of higher strength lager daily (32 units)

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<b>Week 1</b>	32	30	28	26	24	22	20
<b>Week 2</b>	18	16	15	14	13	12	11
<b>Week 3</b>	10	9	8	7	6	5	4



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If you are drinking 2 bottles of wine daily (20 units)

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<b>Week 1</b>	20	19	18	17	16	15	15
<b>Week 2</b>	14	13	12	10	9	9	8
<b>Week 3</b>	7	6	5	4	3	2	2

### If you need to change your brand or type of alcohol

As we know, there have been some major temporary changes in shop opening and availability of products due to the COVID-19 government guidance. You may need to change the brand or type of alcohol you are drinking.

When you are planning your safe reduction, the most important thing is knowing **how many units** you are drinking and **reducing slowly**. Don't worry about the type or brand of alcohol – find the equivalent in units if you have to change drinks due to availability. If you need support with planning your reduction, please call your Recovery Worker or your local Turning Point office to talk through

### Some tips to help with safe alcohol reduction

- Try to eat regularly – cut down on sugar and try to eat little and often
- If you can, take thiamine three times a day
- Keep well hydrated – drink water when you can
- Get as much phone, text or on-line support as you can – from people you know, family, online forums.

### What to do if you get withdrawal symptoms from alcohol

If you are reducing your drinking and notice withdrawals (usually feeling sweaty and shaky, nausea or headaches), sip some alcohol until withdrawals stop. Getting withdrawal symptoms probably means that you are cutting down too quickly and withdrawals can result in seizures (fits) and ultimately be fatal. A seizure (or fit) is marked by violent shaking and a loss of muscle control. You may black out or become confused.

It is important to get your drinking to a level where you are not getting withdrawals and keep at this level for a few days before slowly starting to reduce again. If you are concerned about withdrawals it is important to call your local Turning Point office or your GP. If you live with others, please tell them that if you experience a seizure, become confused, start to see or hear things which others cannot hear, develop double vision or become unsteady on your feet, they should call an ambulance.

### Where to get more information and support

#### Information:

- Online resource aimed at reduction: <https://www.downyourdrink.org.uk/>
- Drinkaware: <https://drinkaware.co.uk>
- Alcohol Change UK: <https://alcoholchange.org.uk/>
- NHS website about alcohol misuse: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/alcohol-misuse](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/alcohol-misuse)

#### Support:

- Alcoholics Anonymous online groups: <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/members/regional-&-localwebsites/>
- Not in a Region/Online-Groups/Meetings
- UK SMART Recovery: <https://smartrecovery.org.uk/>
- Soberistas ( for women specifically): <https://soberistas.com>