

ARE YOU AWARE OF THE HEALTH DRINKING GUIDELINES AND DRINK DRIVING GUIDELINES?

The NHMRC health guidelines are based on daily consumption and relate to the effect of alcohol on your health in both the short and long term. The Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) drink driving limits set guidelines on consumption per hour and relate to levels of intoxication.

HEALTH The NHMRC recommendations aim to help people avoid or reduce the harmful effects of alcohol. These guidelines look at amounts and patterns of drinking such as the total amount drunk on any one day, the amount drunk over a week, and the rate of drinking. The recommendations aim to minimise the risk of physical and social harm from alcohol consumption, both on the day and over your lifetime.

DRIVING In Western Australia, it is illegal to drive a motor vehicle when your Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) is 0.05% or greater (or 0.02% and above for probationary drivers and some

convicted drink drivers for a three year period upon reissue of their licence).

Keeping your BAC level below 0.05% not only keeps you within the law, but keeps you and other road users safer.

The effect that alcohol will have on you on any day will be dependent on factors such as the amount of food you have eaten, how fast your drinks are consumed, your body size and any medication you are taking.

As a guide to keeping your BAC under 0.05% it is recommended that:

- Men drink no more than two standard drinks in the first hour and one per hour after that
- Women drink no more than one standard drink an hour.

This is a guide only.

HAVE YOU HEARD THERE ARE HEALTH BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH ALCOHOL?

For those who choose to drink there is some evidence that drinking small amounts of alcohol may provide some benefits to some people.

Drinking alcohol at levels below the drinking guidelines mentioned previously may provide protection from heart disease for people aged 40 onwards.

However, there is no benefit for younger people, and older people should consider other ways to improve cardiovascular health, such as stopping smoking, exercising more or improving their diet.



Drug and Alcohol Office
Government of Western Australia

HAVE YOU HEARD WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Further copies of this publication or information on other alcohol-related issues are available from:

- HealthInfo on 1300 135 030
- The Alcohol and Drug Information Service on 9442 5000 (metro callers) and 1800 198 024 (toll free for country callers)
- The National Health and Medical Research Council's website <http://nhmrc.gov.au/publications> (under Australian Alcohol Guidelines)
- The Prevention Branch, Drug and Alcohol Office, on 9370 0358 or visit www.dao.health.wa.gov.au.

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HAVE YOU HEARD THERE ARE HEALTH DRINKING GUIDELINES?

As a result of extensive scientific research, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) published new drinking guidelines for Australians in 2001.

The aim of the Australian Alcohol Guidelines is to provide information about the harms and benefits of drinking so that those wanting to drink can enjoy their drinking and reduce the risk of harm to their health.

HAVE YOU HEARD WHAT IS IN A STANDARD DRINK?

A standard drink contains approximately 10 grams of pure alcohol.

Different drinks contain different concentrations of alcohol. This means that the number of standard drinks in any container will depend on the alcohol concentration of the drink and the size of the container.

All packaged alcoholic drinks are now required to clearly display on the label the number of standard drinks in the container.

In many places, drinks served by the glass are not served in standard drink sizes, particularly glasses of wine.

The number of standard drinks contained in a variety of alcoholic drinks and containers is provided on the next page:

Standard Drinks Guide

					
1.5	1	0.8	1	0.7	
375ml Full Strength Beer 4.9% Alc./Vol	375ml Mid Strength Beer 3.5% Alc./Vol	375ml Light Beer 2.7% Alc./Vol	285ml Middy Full Strength Beer 4.9% Alc./Vol	285ml Middy Mid Strength Beer 3.5% Alc./Vol	
					
0.5	1.5	1.5	1	22	0.9
285ml Middy Light Beer 2.7% Alc./Vol	375ml Pre-mix Spirits 5% Alc./Vol	340ml Alcoholic Soda 5.5% Alc./Vol	30ml Spirit Nip 40% Alc./Vol	700ml Bottle of Spirits 40% Alc./Vol	60ml Port/Sherry Glass 18% Alc./Vol
					
1.5	1	1.8	7	38	
170ml Sparkling Wine/Champ 11.5% Alc./Vol	100ml Wine 12% Alc./Vol	180ml Average Restaurant Serve of Wine 12% Alc./Vol	750ml Bottle of Wine 12% Alc./Vol	4 Litre Cask Wine 12% Alc./Vol	

NSW, WA, ACT = Middy. VIC, QLD, TAS = Handle. SA = Schooner. Standard drinks artwork courtesy of National Alcohol Campaign, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing.

HAVE YOU HEARD WHAT TO DO TO REDUCE THE RISKS TO YOUR HEALTH FROM DRINKING ALCOHOL?

	To avoid harm in the long-term	To avoid harm from drinking on one day
MALES	No more than 28 standard drinks in a week On average no more than 4 standard drinks a day One or two alcohol free days a week	Up to 6 standard drinks a day no more than 3 days a week
FEMALES	No more than 14 standard drinks in a week On average no more than 2 standard drinks a day One or two alcohol free days a week	Up to 4 standard drinks a day no more than 3 days a week

- These drinks should be spread over several hours. It is assumed that the drinks are consumed at a moderate rate to minimise intoxication.
- These guidelines assume drinkers are not doing skilled activities such as driving, water sports or using machinery. If you are driving, you should limit your drinks and always stay below the legal Blood Alcohol Concentration level.
- These guidelines are also not recommended if you're:
 1. under 18
 2. pregnant
 3. on medication
 4. have a condition made worse by drinking such as high blood pressure.
- The levels set in the guidelines may be too high for people of below-average body size (ie: below 60kg for men and 50kg for women).

If you fit into any of these categories, see your GP for information on appropriate drinking limits.