



University Hospitals Bristol  
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient information service  
**Bristol Royal Infirmary**

# Alcohol, slips, trips and falls



Respecting everyone  
Embracing change  
Recognising success  
Working together  
**Our hospitals.**

  
**Above  
& Beyond**  
Fundraising for Bristol city centre hospitals



# Having a fall can have a huge impact on our lives

Falling can have a huge number of short and long-term effects on us. As well as causing potentially painful injuries, it can also affect our confidence, and reduce our independence in being able to do things for ourselves.

**Falls are not inevitable. If you have noticed that you are experiencing falls, slips or trips fairly often, it may be helpful to look at how much alcohol you are consuming.** Alcohol can significantly increase your risk of falling over and causing injury.

## The effects of alcohol include:

- loss of co-ordination and memory, which can lead to falls and general confusion
- causing the effects of some drugs to be exaggerated, such as diazepam (Valium)
- thinning of the bones, which can occur with heavy drinking
- older people are more susceptible to the effects of alcohol, which can increase the risk of having a fall.

## Alcohol guidance

The NHS recommends that if you drink alcohol there is no safe level.

Men and women should not regularly drink more than 14 units of alcohol per week. Ideally this should be spread evenly over three days or more.

Women who are pregnant should not drink alcohol at all.

# One unit of alcohol is equal to:

**One unit**



1/2 pint of  
ordinary strength  
beer, lager or cider

**One unit**



Small glass of  
wine

**One unit**



One single  
measure  
of spirits

**One unit**



One small  
glass of  
sherry

**One unit**



One single  
measure, of  
aperitifs

Alcohol can interact with certain medications causing unwanted side effects, or can stop the medication from working as effectively. You should consult your GP if you use alcohol and regularly take any medications.

If you are regularly drinking over the recommended limits of alcohol, it may be helpful to think about cutting down.

If you are concerned that you are experiencing any slips, trips or falls, or are concerned about your alcohol use, don't be embarrassed – get some advice.

# Contacts

DHI: 01454 868 750 (South Gloucestershire)

Addaction (Weston-Super-Mare): 01934 427 940

ROADS (Bristol): 0117 987 6000

Advocacy service: 0117 965 4444

SMART Recovery: 0117 922 2364

SWAN Project: 0117 989 2521

Hawksprings: 0117 964 2859

NHS Advice: 111

Age UK: 0117 929 7537

[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)

[www.nhs.uk/drinkcheck](http://www.nhs.uk/drinkcheck)

## **For loved ones, family and friends of someone who has alcohol problems**

DHI: 0117 916 6588

Al-Anon: 020 7403 0888

You can also get help, advice and support from your GP or family doctor.

## More information

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/Falls](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Falls)

[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

[www.nhs.uk/alcohol](http://www.nhs.uk/alcohol)

### Notes



As well as providing clinical care, our Trust has an important role in research. This allows us to discover new and improved ways of treating patients.

While under our care, you may be invited to take part in research. To find out more please visit:  
[www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation](http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation)

For access to other patient leaflets and information please go to the following address:

[www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/](http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/)

**Hospital switchboard: 0117 923 0000**



**Minicom: 0117 934 9869**



**[www.uhbristol.nhs.uk](http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk)**



For an interpreter or signer please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter.



For this leaflet in large print or PDF format, please email [patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk](mailto:patientleaflets@uhbristol.nhs.uk).

