

8 top tips for healthier drinking and happier relationships

Healthier drinking usually makes for happier relationships with others and can improve your overall health and wellbeing.

Here are some top tips for healthier drinking and relationships:

- 

1. Talk it over: If something is playing on your mind, it's good advice to talk things through when both of you are sober – don't wait until one or both of you has started drinking.
- 

2. Pay attention to your feelings and behaviour: Recognise the situations in which you tend to drink more than you would like and how that impacts on your mood and that of those around you. And make a plan for how you would deal with it differently next time for a better outcome.
- 

3. Keep track of your drinking: Recording what you drink for a few weeks will help you understand your drinking pattern so that you can decide if you want to make a change. Use a free app like **Try Dry** to keep track of your drinking and set goals to help you cut down.
- 

4. Find ways to support each other to cut down: The UK's Chief Medical Officers recommend not drinking more than 14 units a week; that's about six pints of lager or a bottle and a half of wine. Finding ways to support each other to cut down can help you reset your relationship with alcohol and make it less of a feature in your relationships.
- 

7. Ask for help: Ask for help if you feel you need it, or if you're worried about someone else's drinking. Lots of us struggle with alcohol at some point in our lives and need support to make a change. Talk to your GP or your local alcohol service, or visit the **Alcohol Change UK** website to find out more about getting support.
- 

6. Find alcohol-free ways to have fun: From walking to rock climbing, mocktail making to star-baking, watching a movie to having a boogie, there are so many ways to have fun together which don't have to involve alcohol. Designate a night every week to spend some quality time with someone you love and see how much fun you can have without alcohol.
- 

5. Take a break from drinking together: Taking a few days off alcohol every week or taking an extended break like having a **Dry January** can be a great way to cut down and give your body a rest. Taking time off together means you are more likely to stick to your alcohol-free break, and will create opportunities for you to enjoy each other's company with a clear head.
- 

8. Get relationship support: If your drinking is negatively affecting you or your relationships, get support from **Relate**. You can access counselling on your own or as a couple.

Find out more at www.alcoholchange.org.uk

This information sheet does not cover domestic abuse. If you are affected in any way by domestic abuse, please seek help. If you are in immediate danger, dial 999. Refuge also provides the 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline on **0808 2000 247**. There are many other specialist organisations that can help you. Read our factsheet on Alcohol and domestic abuse to find out more.