



Alcohol Care Team

**What are the safe limits of drinking?
Is your drinking a problem?
Should you be concerned?
Do you require help?**

Building healthier lives

UHB is a no smoking Trust

What is Alcohol Dependence?

Alcohol dependence, sometimes known as alcoholism, is the most serious form of a drinking problem and describes a strong, often uncontrollable desire to drink.

People physically dependent on alcohol typically drink every day; often needing to drink soon after they wake to stop them from feeling unwell.

They need alcohol to feel 'normal',

Common symptoms of withdrawal include:

- Tremors ('the shakes')
- Sweating
- Fast heart rate
- Nausea
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Insomnia
- Visual hallucinations & seizures (fits) can occur in severe withdrawal).

They may notice that they experience symptoms of withdrawal when their alcohol intake is lower than usual.

Treatment options

Reduction

Your health will improve if you reduce your drinking but it is vital that you do this slowly to avoid withdrawal symptoms. Community alcohol services can help you to work out how many units you drink each day and advice on a slow reduction, (usually by 2-5 units per day). Try to avoid drinking out of habit, instead have a drink when you are beginning to experience withdrawal symptoms.

If you feel unwell due to withdrawal symptoms, you have cut down too quickly and need to increase your drinking to control this.

Binge drinking

Binging can also be harmful and increase your risk of liver disease, injuries, violence and cancer. Binging = 6 units for women/ 8 units for men in 1 session.

Medical Warning

If you have physical withdrawal symptoms, it is vital that you do not suddenly stop drinking or reduce your alcohol intake rapidly. You must discuss with specialists a planned reduction.

NHS Lower Risk Guidelines

Do not regularly drink more than:



Do not save up your units for just 1-2 days
Drink-free days are a good way to cut down

Detoxification

During a detox you may be given medication to control any withdrawal symptoms. This medication will make it safe for you to stop drinking completely. You must want to be alcohol free (abstinent) for a detox to be appropriate.

There is support available to help you live an alcohol free life, community services, your GP, Alcoholics Anonymous or available rehabilitation services.

Many community services are listed overleaf.

Birmingham residents - CGL offer support and treatment.
Tel: 0121 227 5890
www.changegrowlive.org/drug-and-alcohol-service-birmingham

Solihull - SIAS offer support and treatment. Including under 18's.
Tel: 0121 301 4141
www.sias-solihull.org.uk

South Staffordshire - STARS
www.staffstars.org
Tamworth
Email: STARSEAST@MPFT.NHS.UK
Telephone: 01827 50664

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) - provides peer support.
Tel: 0800 9177 650
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org/AA-Meetings/Find-a-meeting-for-details.

Family support

- Al-anon 0800 0086 811
- Ad-fam - <https://adfam.org.uk/>
- will help find support in your local area

Cranston – Worcester services,
Tel: 0300 303 8200
<https://cranstoun.org/help-and-advice/alcohol-other-drugs/worcestershire/>

Additional Information:



Please use the QR code to give feedback on our team

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email **interpreting.service@uhb.nhs.uk**.

Alcohol Care Team

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