

Facts and Fiction About Drinking

Recently, there have been a number of articles in the press about drinking. So, what are some of the facts about drinking and what is fiction?

A couple of drinks a day is alright

- Not necessarily – the guideline is not more than two standard drinks a day. However existing medical conditions, your mental health, weight, gender, and age can all impact on this. In many cases, two standard drinks a day would be too much.

Drinking alcohol destroys brain cells

- Not totally true – alcohol won't destroy the brain cells but it cause damage making it difficult for them to convey messages

Having two alcohol free days a week is healthy

- Maybe – there is no actual science behind this but many people find it helps them to keep their alcohol consumption within healthy limits.

Binge drinks is harmful

- Absolutely – regular bouts of binge drinking has a significant impact on the body including increasing the risk of heart problems, pancreatic cancer and liver disease.
- Binge drinking is considered 4-5 drinks in a day. A person may have 2 drinks with a meal then sip another 2 drinks during the evening – although unaffected by the alcohol, this would be considered binge drinking. There is some suggestion that regular binge drinking like this may lead to an increase in daily alcohol consumption as people don't realise it is doing harm.

If you drink every day you'll become an alcoholic

- Quite possibly – steady drinking over time is a major contributor to alcohol dependency and alcohol related health problems.

People who starting drinking when they are young are more likely to become alcoholic

- Possibly – People who start regularly drinking large amounts at a young age have an increased risk of developing alcohol related health problems and alcohol dependency. However, children who are taught drinking in moderation often do not develop health issues.

Alcoholics don't get drunk

- Not true – but alcoholics often have a higher tolerance for alcohol so can drink more before appearing drunk.

You are more likely to drink if others around you are drinking

- True – having friends or a partner who drinks will increase the likelihood of you drinking. Also, young people are influenced by the drinking habits of parents, peer and role models.

Having a drink will give you "dutch courage"

- Maybe – alcohol is basically sedating but an initial drink may act as a stimulant which will give you dutch courage. However, the more you drink, the more sleepy you become.

Drinking coffee can help you sober up

- This isn't true – nor will exercising or eating or drinking a "cure". The only thing that helps you sober up is when the alcohol works its way out of your system.

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