

# Alcohol and the body

Excessive drinking above the recommended level on a regular basis can have long-term effects on the body.

## Brain

- > memory loss
- > confusion
- > blackouts
- > difficulty in solving problems
- > strokes.

## Breast

- > cancer risk rises with increasing consumption.

## Heart

- > high blood pressure
- > irregular pulse
- > damaged heart muscle.

## Intestines

- > inflammation
- > bleeding
- > ulcers
- > cancer.

## Liver

- > impaired liver function
- > painful inflammation
- > cirrhosis
- > liver cancer.

## Drinking guidelines

The *Australian guidelines to reduce health risks from drinking alcohol* recommend that healthy men and women should drink:

- > no more than ten standard drinks a week in order to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related diseases or injury.
- > no more than four standard drinks on any one day.

The less you drink, the lower your risk of harm from alcohol.

For more information about standard drinks and the Australian alcohol guidelines, visit [www.alcohol.gov.au](http://www.alcohol.gov.au).

## Mouth and throat

- > cancer of the mouth, throat and oesophagus.

## Muscles

- > weakness
- > loss of muscle tissue.

## Nervous system

- > tingling and loss of sensation in hands and feet caused by damaged nerves
- > impaired coordination and balance.

## Pancreas

- > painful inflammation.

## Reproductive system

- > impotence
- > reduced fertility
- > fetal abnormalities.

## Stomach

- > inflammation of the stomach lining
- > bleeding.

## For more information

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### Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS)

Phone: 1300 13 1340

Confidential telephone counselling and information available between 8.30am and 10pm every day.

Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia

Phone: (08) 7425 5000 [www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/dassa](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/dassa)

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