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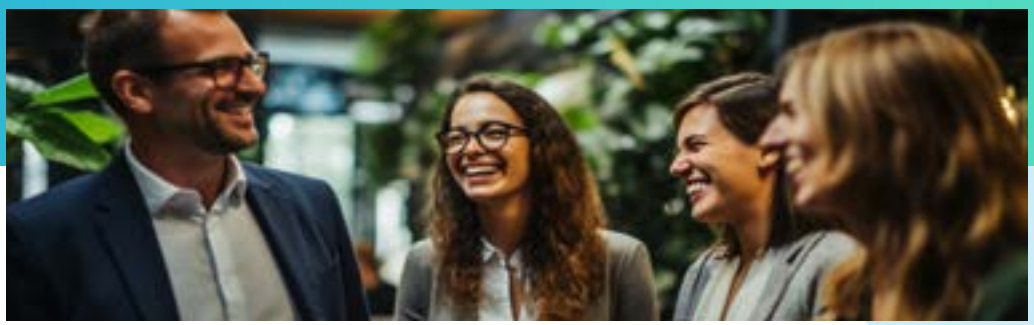
Alcohol Awareness



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Lead a healthier life with reduced alcohol consumption

Content reviewed in January 2025
By Health Shield's Wellbeing Team

Alcohol consumption is a common part of social and personal life, but understanding its effects and practicing moderation can significantly impact overall wellbeing and work performance.

In terms of that impact on the workplace, according to Alcohol Change UK, alcohol tends to cost around 7 billion pounds to workplaces in the UK every year* and those costs come from increased absences due to the impact alcohol has on our health such as loss of productivity, loss of performance, maybe increased turnover and even reputational damage.

Key effects of alcohol on health and productivity

- **Physical health:** Regular or excessive alcohol consumption increases the risk of serious conditions, including cancer, kidney damage, and high blood pressure
- **Mental health:** Alcohol is linked to heightened anxiety and depression
- **Work performance:** Drinking can affect motor skills, focus, and decision making even the next day, reducing workplace productivity. For instance, a single large glass of wine can take 2–3 hours to process, contributing to "binge drinking" if consumed frequently

Tips to lead a healthier life with reduced alcohol consumption

The Chief Medical Officer advises limiting alcohol intake to no more than 14 units per week, spread across multiple days with alcohol-free days included. Here are 7 practical steps to reduce alcohol consumption and boost your team's overall wellbeing:

1 Stay within limits

Adhere to the recommended 14-unit weekly limit.

*Alcohol Change Org

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2 Plan alcohol-free days

Introduce regular alcohol-free days into their routine.

3 Opt for alternatives

Choose non-alcoholic beverages at social events.

4 Track your intake

Use unit calculators or similar tools to monitor consumption.

5 Avoid stress drinking

Explore healthier ways to manage stress instead of turning to alcohol.

6 Set goals

Gradually reduce intake by setting achievable targets.

7 Promote awareness

Support workplace initiatives like clear alcohol policies and access to educational resources.

The Benefits of Reducing Alcohol

Making small adjustments to alcohol consumption can lead to significant personal and professional benefits:

- **Better sleep:** Improved rest as alcohol disrupts sleep quality.
- **Sharper thinking:** Enhanced cognitive function and focus.
- **Boosted productivity:** A clear mind fosters more effective performance.
- **Enhanced wellbeing:** Long-term health benefits for both body and mind.

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Support resources

If you or someone you know is seeking to reduce alcohol consumption, consider these resources:

- Drink Aware
- Alcohol Change UK
- NHS Guidelines on Alcohol

Remember, small changes in habits can lead to big improvements to your team's wellbeing and performance. Whether for personal or professional growth, reducing alcohol consumption is a step toward a healthier, more mindful lifestyle.

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Find out more

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Got a question about your cash plan?
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