

KNOWING WHY YOU DRINK MATTERS

People drink alcohol for many reasons: to relax, have fun, deal with stress, or fit in socially. Knowing why you drink can help address the root cause of the issue, allowing you to be happier and more comfortable in your own skin while sober.

For example, some people drink due to social anxiety. Acknowledging this allows them to address their anxious feelings directly, which can then lessen the urge to drink alcohol in the first place.

YOU'VE GOT OPTIONS

When it comes to changing your drinking habits, you have two main options: quitting alcohol completely or cutting down. Both approaches can lead to significant improvements in your life.

Cutting Down: Even making small reductions in your drinking can have big effects on your health and well-being. You might find yourself feeling more energetic, sleeping better, and having better relationships. It's about finding a balance that works for you and making gradual changes towards a healthier lifestyle.

Quitting: For some people, quitting alcohol altogether is the best option. While it might sound daunting, many people successfully remove alcohol from their life and there is a huge amount of support available if this is what you decide.

Whichever option you choose, Student Health Services are here to support you throughout your journey. We can help you create a plan and consider different strategies to find what best suits you.



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#8797a

IS ALCOHOL CAUSING PROBLEMS IN YOUR LIFE?

IT DOESN'T HAVE
TO BE LIKE THIS.



MENTAL HEALTH
& WELLBEING

A LOT OF KIWIS DRINK A LOT

Drinking is common in Aotearoa, with 3.2 million adults having at least one drink in 2022. Excessive drinking is also common with one in five adults participating in hazardous drinking during the same year.

While having a little alcohol can be enjoyable, drinking too much can cause problems like bad decisions, relationships problems, health issues and difficulties keeping up with studies. This shows that just because something is common, it doesn't mean it's all good.

It's important to note that these numbers are decreasing over time, showing that more and more people are deciding to reduce their drinking, or stop all together.

Student Health Service | Hauora Ākonga | 07 838 4037

Free and confidential mental health & wellbeing support. Counselling specifically for substance issues is also available.

Hours: Mon, Tues, Thur, Fri 9am – 4:30pm. Wed 9:30am – 4:30pm

Alcohol and Drug Helpline | 0800 787 797

Free 24/7 support for anyone in New Zealand with a question or concern about their own or someone else's drinking or other drug use.

Healthline | 0800 611 116

Free 24/7 health advice, information and treatment from healthcare professionals.

Lifeline Aotearoa | 0800 543 354

Free 24/7 mental health guidance.

Need to Talk? | 1737

Free 24/7 service for anyone feeling down, anxious, a bit overwhelmed or just need to chat to someone. You can call or text **1737**. Call the Māori Line at **0800 787 798** or the Pasifika Line at **0800 787 799** for culture specific support and referrals

TAKING THE FIRST STEP

The hardest part is often taking that first step. Fear of judgment or consequences can sometimes prevent people from seeking the help they need.

Please know that Student Health prioritise your well-being and confidentiality. We are here to provide support with care and understanding.

If you have any questions or are ready to get some support. Please call one of the numbers listed above.

He waka eke noa | A canoe which we are all in with no exception.

We are all in this together.

TIPS FOR CUTTING DOWN OR QUITTING



Seek Professional Support

Contact one of many dedicated support services, such as Student Health Services, for free and confidential guidance and resources.



Set Clear Goals

Write down what you want to achieve and why it is important to you. Journal daily to organise your thoughts and track your progress.



Build a Support Network

Surround yourself with supportive people to encourage and hold you accountable. Join a club to socialise without alcohol.

Ēhara tāku toa i te toa takatahi, engari he toa takitini. | Our strength is not made from us alone, but made from many.



Find New Ways to Manage Emotions

Try some strategies like yoga, meditation, going for a walk, or talking to one of the Mental Health & Wellbeing team at Student Health.



Manage Triggers

Create a plan to avoid people, places, or situations that trigger the urge to drink. This could involve changing routines, finding new social activities, or politely declining invitations where alcohol is present.



Celebrate Progress

Acknowledge and celebrate each milestone in your journey to cutting down or quitting drinking. Reward yourself for your efforts with healthy self-care.



SAFE DRINKING GUIDELINES

If you decide to reduce your drinking, you might wonder how much is okay. The NZ Health Promotion Agency makes the following recommendations:

REDUCE YOUR LONG-TERM HEALTH RISKS		REDUCE YOUR RISKS OF INJURY	
No more than...		No more than...	
2	3	4	5
STANDARD DRINKS	STANDARD DRINKS	STANDARD DRINKS	STANDARD DRINKS
Daily		On any single occasion	
and no more than 10 a week	and no more than 15 a week	PREGNANT WOMEN	
And at least 2 alcohol-free days per week		There is no known safe level of alcohol use at any stage of pregnancy	

When some people read these guidelines, they feel discouraged, thinking there's no point in trying because they don't believe they will ever drink less than this.

It's important to understand that reducing your alcohol intake can still be beneficial, even if you haven't yet reached the recommended limits. The guidelines serve some people as a target – something to work towards.

In saying that, please know that the safest amount of alcohol to drink is none.