



SAFER DRINKING TIPS

Here are some tips to keep you safer and healthier no matter how you choose to change your drinking. Consider starting with at least one thing on the list.

STAY *healthier* WHILE YOU DRINK

Drink water	Why? Reduces hangovers How? Alternate between drinks of water & alcohol
Try to eat	Why? Food eases the pace of alcohol entering the bloodstream so it does less harm. Food also gives you important nutrients. How? Eat before you start drinking and while you drink. Proteins (meat, cheese, eggs) are especially good choices.
Take vitamins	Why? Drinking can take away important nutrients from your body. How? Try to take B-vitamins (folate, thiamine, B12).

MAKE YOUR DRINKING *safer*

Avoid non-beverage alcohol	Why? Mouthwash, aftershave, cooking wine, vanilla extract, hand sanitizer, etc. contain unpredictable amounts of alcohol and other poisonous ingredients. How? Be sure to drink alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, liquor) if drinking
Count your drinks	Why? Helps you think about how much you really want or need How? Keep bottle caps and count them later, or keep a diary. Keep track over time to see what amount works best for you.
Choose drinks with less alcohol	Why? You might be getting more alcohol than you thought. How? Check labels and try beer with 4-5% alcohol, or add non-alcoholic mixers to increase volume without increasing alcohol.
Space your drinks	Why? Keep the buzz going for longer and avoid the not-so-good things. How? Pace yourself, sip your drink, alternate between alcohol and water.
Avoid mixing drugs	Why? Drinking and using drugs at the same time can stress your heart and liver and lead to overdose. How? Avoid other drugs when you drink.
Drink in a safe place	Why? People can take advantage of you when you're drinking. Drinking in unsafe places can lead to fights, hassles, and arrest. How? Avoid drinking heavily with people you don't trust and drink in places where you feel more in control of your surroundings.

CHANGE *how much* YOU DRINK

Less is more	Why? Most things people like about alcohol occur when they are buzzed not drunk. How? Pace your drinking to keep the buzz going on less drinks. You might pick a limit and ask a friend to help you stick with it.
Choose not to use	Why? Not drinking—even for a few hours—gives your body a rest. How? Try a few hours of not drinking or one non-drinking day a week. To stop completely, medical detox might help.
Avoid withdrawal	Why? Alcohol withdrawal—shakes, seizures, or DTs—can be serious. How? If you want to stop drinking and get more than a little shaky if you don't drink, medical detox is safest. If you choose to drink, alcohol can relieve withdrawal symptoms.